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ABSTRACT

The following are among the 104 papers included: "Vocational Education and Training Partnerships in Remote Aboriginal Communities" (Arnott, Dembski); "Participation in Adult Education" (Benn); "Learning Organisations" (Bierema); "A Conceptual Framework for Understanding the Institutional Dynamics Involved in a University's Response to an Allegation of Racism" (Bishop); "An Analysis and Critique of Transformation Theory and Adult Learning" (Boucouvalas); "Research in Adult Learning" (Brew); "Reforming Australian Education and Training" (Brown); "Challenging Metrocentrism" (Butler); "Life at the Glass Ceiling" (Caffarella, Clark, Ingram); "Crossing Borders and Breaking Boundaries" (Cavanagh); "Learning as a Non-unitary Self" (Clark); "New Education Policy Directions in South Africa" (Cooper); "Globalisation and a Pedagogy of (Dis)location" (Edwards, Usher); "Learning to Learn" (Ettling, Hayes); "Postgraduate Education and Adult Education" (Ferrier); "The Significance of African-American Language

and Learning in an Adult Education Context" (Flowers, Sheared); "Intimate Cultures of Learning" (Fraser, West); "Technologies of Compliance in Training" (Garrick, Solomon); "Learning Trajectories" (Gorard et al.); "The Political/Economic Boundary of Adult and Continuing Education" (Grosjean); "Crossing Borders in Research in Adult Education" (Hake); "The Practice of Guidance in an Employee Development Programme" (Harrison); "Demand and Supply of Adult Education and Training" (Houtkoop); "Beyond Facilitation in Adult Education" (Johnson-Bailey, Cervero); "Epistemology of Groups as Learning Systems" (Kasl, Marsick); "Vocational Education and Really Useful Knowledge" (Kilminster); "Is There a Boundary between Formal and Nonmoral Education?" (Kilpatrick); "Identifying Groups of Learners through the Use of Learning Strategies" (Kolody, Conti, Lockwood); "Understanding Adult Student Learning Using Theories of Academic Literacy" (Lea); "Working Class Culture, Adult Education and Informal Learning" (Livingstone); "Action-Based Research" (Lucas, Davies, Cochrane); "Restructuring Adult Education" (McIntyre); "Afri-centricity" (Mashengele); "Boundaries and Quality" (Millar); "Challenging Boundaries in Adult and Higher Education through Technological Innovation" (Miller, Leung, Kennedy); "Minority Women at the Iron Borders of Academe" (Mojab); "Research Findings on the Effectiveness of Guided Imagery/Visualisation as a Technique in the Facilitation of Transformative Learning" (Morton); "Workers as Learners and Learners as Workers" (Payne); and "On Formal, Non-formal Lifelong Learning" (Percy). (MN)

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research in the education of adults

an international conference

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Proceedings of the
27th Annual SCUTREA Conference

edited by

Paul Armstrong, Nod Miller and Miriam Zukas

Birkbeck College
University of London
July 1997

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SCUTREA '97

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The Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA)

SCUTREA is a forum for all concerned with research into the education of adults and those involved with the development of adult education as a body of knowledge. It began as an organisation with a membership consisting solely of university departments of adult education. SCUTREA now draws upon a broader constituency and welcomes individual and institutional members from across the international educational field. Adult education is a growing and fast changing sector and SCUTREA currently provides a focus for the diverse interests of practitioners and researchers. It is a pivotal point in the adult education world in Britain, and is also linked to organisations in both the North and south, enhancing members' access to international contacts.

The SCUTREA Annual Conference is a major event in the adult education calendar. In addition, smaller workshops, conferences and seminars are organised throughout the year, often jointly with other national organisations promoting the interests of adult and continuing education research and practice. Members' research and teaching interests are linked through working groups which any member is welcome to join.

The dynamism of SCUTREA is reflected in the publications which have been generated from the working groups and conferences and the organisation has moved into an expansive period during the current decade. The papers from all previous years' conferences, 1970 to 1997, will be available on CD-ROM for use on both the PC and the Macintosh in the second half of 1997. The organisation produces a quarterly newsletter - *SCOOP* - to keep members up to date.

Membership is open to all individuals and institutions who are accepted by the Council as 'making a contribution to the study of or research into any aspect of learning, education or training in adulthood'.

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Borders crossed, boundaries broken, conferences constructed

Paul Armstrong, Birkbeck College, University of London, UK

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Miriam Zukas, University of Leeds, UK

An introduction to a set of proceedings as momentous as these is not merely a formality to be discharged as quickly as possible. Instead, it allows the editors the opportunity to explain the historical, social and pedagogical context for the conference, and provides a necessary pulling together and justification for what may seem a disparate set of conference customs and practices that have emerged in the setting up of this international event. It also allows the three of us the opportunity to reflect on our privileged early readings of the hundred-plus papers to be presented at the conference. As we write this at the end of May, red-eyed from proof-reading into the night and grateful to those presenters who took the trouble to read the precise conference paper instructions, we are overwhelmed with what we have all achieved — an international event that will enable more than two hundred adult educators to consider research in the education of adults through the theme of *Crossing borders, breaking boundaries*. But more of this conference later. We start with a bit of history.

From BANANAE[1] to TAD and beyond

We are aware that any historical account is partial and open to critical challenge. Your chance will arrive in the final session of this event when a wide range of individuals will be involved in sharing their perspectives on the history of how we got to this point. For now, we use our editorial prerogative to privilege our account.

The detailed account is chronicled in various conference volumes, soon to be available on CD ROM), but briefly, during the mid-1980s, the Kellogg Foundation funded a two-stage exchange between North American and British academics who were relatively new to the profession. North American colleagues came to SCUTREA's annual conference, while British individuals participated in North American adult education conferences. The exchange groups also visited departments in each other's countries. During this process, a joint conference was proposed to widen the circle of those who had had the benefit of crossing both physical and intellectual boundaries. Although it seemed impossible to think that we could do it, the networking and trust built up between many of the exchangees, even before the days of email, made it possible to work together within and across countries to bring about what was then seen as the final outcome of the exchange — the Transatlantic Dialogue (TAD) conference. Jointly sponsored by three of this year's sponsors (SCUTREA, AERC and CASAE), it took place in Leeds in July 1988 and, like this year's event, involved over two hundred people participating in a hundred presentations.

Over the next few years, the networking continued — more individuals crossed the Atlantic to work together, go to conferences, exchange ideas. Indeed, networks extended both independently and through conference and exchange visits to include individuals in Europe, Australia and New Zealand. These new arrangements were both structural and interpersonal: the development of a new European research organisation (ESREA) enhanced relationships across Europe, while the relocation of two TAD participants to New Zealand fortified what were already good links; the odd exchange trip to and from Australia also consolidated personal and professional relationships.

When Nod Miller returned from AERC in 1994 with suggestions from colleagues that we needed another international conference, those who had previously been involved in TAD were both terrified at the undertaking and challenged by the thought of trying to take a more global approach. And those who had not been part of the 1988 conference and who had later commented on the feelings of exclusion from such a bonding experience had the opportunity to contribute to the development of what is, after all, a historic event almost before it takes place.

The co-operation of the five research organisations has been remarkable, made more remarkable by the fact that some organisations barely exist outside their conference or networking structures, and have little opportunity for collective decision-making. Those planning the event (a group based on the original exchange and significant individuals who had joined the friendship network since then) worked out a plan which would involve formal contact with possible partner organisations during 1995. We were keen to include individuals from as many parts of the world as possible but we knew that our limits would mean certain restrictions. For example, we knew that we would have to conduct the proceedings in English as we could not afford translation facilities. We also knew that we would have to rely on global networking to involve those in parts of the world where we had few formal contacts. Of course, this presented its own challenges in terms of working out how to solicit proposals for papers which would go to appropriate sponsoring organisations.

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[1] British and North American Network of Adult Educators

We also tried to establish sponsorship for individuals who would otherwise be unable to afford to fly to Britain — with little success[2].

Despite these problems of sponsorship, we are delighted to include participants from Brazil, Botswana, India, Malaysia, Iran, and South Africa, as well as those from Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

The details of the negotiations with the partner organisations will remain a closely guarded secret (perhaps, like British secret documents, released after fifty years) until some researcher decides to analyse the social construction of adult education research as a global field of concern; suffice it to say that this event marks the next stage in the evolution of a forum for critical and global dialogue with colleagues who research the education of adults.

Conference pedagogies and sociologies

Like other organisations, SCUTREA has a sometimes unarticulated set of suppositions about what a conference should be and what it should do. In part, this emerges out of the last twenty-seven years of practice and is influenced by our collective exposure to other conferences and group events, as well as our shared history of SCUTREA conferences. But it also emerges from our insight that conferences should be (and are not always) learning events. Their conduct should have much in common with the best adult education classroom practice, although their intensity and brevity require that we pay particular attention to the nurturing of this temporary community (see below).

In this section, we draw attention to some of the ways in which the structure of the conference is designed to generate as much learning amongst participants as possible (within and outside the formally organised events) — learning that is sometimes prescribed by the organisers, even if it is not taken up by participants.

We begin with the conference theme. For us, the emergence of a theme that will enable participants to speak across different interests to each other, and to make connections between otherwise disparate contributions, is a contentious but critical process in conference planning. Through the conference theme, we attempt to move discussion away from structures and case studies (normally fodder for adult education conferences in the UK). Those who have presented at SCUTREA before will know that there is some debate about the effectiveness of the conference theme to unify deliberations, but as editors we believe that this is a much more effective way to generate common ground for discussion than the 'anything goes' formula that operates elsewhere.

We also believe that we benefit more from mutual dialogue than from the presentation of single papers and hence we have developed the format of shared slots over the last few years. We cannot always guarantee to match pairs well, but we try to encourage those presenting papers in the same session to contact each other before the conference to discuss possible synergistic arrangements and themes. We ask those presenting to formulate some questions for respondents, rather than merely reproducing their papers. We try to facilitate each session with a chair who takes responsibility for making each event a productive learning experience — and this may mean taking a more directive role in difficult times than the chair might anticipate.

We also try to increase levels of participation well beyond the formal sessions. You will have noticed that the plenary events at this conference have been designed to act as rituals for engagement and departure (a little like formal assembly at school), rather than as opportunities to hear someone prestigious speak to us all about something we should all be interested in. The importance of symbolic events has not escaped us, but we do not believe they have to be represented by the plenary speaker. Sometimes we disregard rituals if they do not enhance our objectives. For example, our shared understanding of conferences as democratic organisations has dictated our rejection of that upper-middle-class and masculine tradition, the after-dinner speaker. Memories of particularly sexist and unpleasant speakers at some of the earlier SCUTREA conferences still casts their shadow.

SCUTREA events, in common with many British academic conferences, take place in a residential setting in which all participants live and work in close proximity with one another over a period of several days. This means that such events have clear boundaries in space as well as time. The concentration of people in a shared environment can have the effect of compressing time and intensifying interaction so that the temporary community created in the conference becomes self-contained and detached from participants' everyday realities. At the same time, the temporary community takes on microcosmic features of societal structures, developing its own cultures, rituals, currencies, power differentials and systems of stratification. We would argue that there is much to be gained from recognising this transformational process by which a conference becomes a mini-society. Furthermore, we believe that this constitutes an important dimension of the learning to be derived at and from the conference. In this conference we have attempted to build in opportunities for collective reflection on the process as well as the content of the conference. We have also incorporated elements into the design of the conference which are intended to enhance informal learning and encourage participants to share experiences across national and institutional boundaries. These elements include the pairing of papers, the allocation of participants to cross-cultural tribes symbolising by wildlife, group activities such as the mystery evening and conference media such as the daily newspaper.

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[2] We are however pleased that three publishers — the National Institute of Adult and Continuing Education, Routledge, and Taylor and Francis — agreed to contribute towards the costs of the production of these conference proceedings.

Borders and boundaries

The idea of a conference theme is to encourage participants to focus on similar issues, regardless of their particular theoretical perspectives, disciplines or approaches. The recognition that the boundaries between traditional subject areas and schools of thought are being blurred or transformed was the starting point for the choice of the theme for this year's conference. It seemed a particularly apt theme given that the dialogue the event sought to promote required the crossing of geographical borders. The theme seemed both topical in these postmodern times and representative of what this international conference aimed to do. In *Border Crossings*, Henry Giroux attempted to revitalise the radical potential of education by challenging the borders between cultural work and critical theory and praxis.

It seemed to us that the metaphors of border crossing and boundary breaking opened up possibilities for exploration of new developments in adult education research Just as crossing the borders which mark off geographical areas or political territories from one another may require travellers to adjust their behaviours and speech patterns and to appreciate new landscapes and cultures, so the crossing of intellectual borders requires scholars and researchers to engage with different forms of knowledge and to adopt fresh perspectives on familiar ideas. Boundary breaking carries connotations of testing limits, creating new possibilities and abandoning conventional rules and expectations. These activities were ones which we hoped would be encouraged by the images in the conference title.

It has occurred to us since our initial discussions that the metaphors contained in the conference theme carry other less wholesome connotations. It is not just travellers in search of enlightenment and a thirst for knowledge of different cultures who cross borders; colonisers, imperialists and tourists do so too. Furthermore, the activity of boundary breaking can carry implications of manly adventure and aggressive physicality, which we did not have in mind at all.

Fixing the boundaries

On a purely practical level, the conference organisers needed to have agreed procedures for inviting and selecting contributions for the conference, which is constrained by immediate boundaries of time and location. Certainly, the dialogue begins before, and will continue afterwards, but the conference as a physical entity cannot be without bounds.

There are also conceptual, ideological and theoretical reasons for selecting papers. If we wanted to ensure that there is some thematic coherence and that the academic quality of papers is assured as far as possible (Zukas 1996, 2-3), then we needed to put some gate-keeping and boundary maintenance procedures in place. This is the function of the Call for Papers. First, it should orient potential contributors to the nature of the conference and its community of audiences. Second, it draws attention to the constraints (schedule and deadlines, English language as medium of communication, word limits for written paper, mode and timing of presentation, organisation and control of presentations). In this case, its orientation was made more specific by suggesting that the papers and presentations might challenge or support boundary maintenance in one or more areas:

- adult education as a field of practice
- interdisicplinarity and multi-disciplinarity
- perspectives and traditions
- social and political commitment and continuing education
- formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning
- geographical boundaries (national, regional, local)
- rural and urban provision
- learning and new technologies
- cultural identifies, including race, class and gender
- diversity and disadvantage
- professional practices
- cross-cultural themes and issues.

In an international and cross-cultural conference, it is important that these boundaries are negotiated and agreed across the world. Recognising the impossibility of having a genuinely international conference, with all parts and cultures of the world represented, five selection panels were set up, based on existing organisations, so that the AERC planning committee chose the papers from North America (US and Canada), the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education was responsible for Canada only, the Research Network of the Australian Association of Adult and Community Education for Australia, New Zealand, South East Asian and the Pacific Nations, the European Society for Research in the Education of Adults (ESREA) for European countries, and SCUTREA specifically for the United Kingdom and the rest of the world not covered by the other organisations.

This purely practical decision was, of course, far from perfect, and neglected large parts of the world (most of Africa, Central and South America, and large parts of Asia and the Middle East). We had to trade off idealism and realism in this process.

The next important decision that acted as a constraint, but in practice seemed to work out surprisingly quite well (mainly thanks to electronic mail), was the target number of papers each partner organisation could select, given the physical and time constraints that any conference would have. Our preliminary discussions about potential demand for places suggested the way in which the total places might be apportioned. But all our arrangements were kept flexible to ensure that we could respond to variations in demand. All the planning groups agreed that we needed to accept more papers than we could accommodate in anticipation of those who would find the constraints too much, or whose circumstances would change. We had a final target of 102, which we have exceeded slightly.

The selection of the papers was largely left to each of the five panels; the size and nature of each varied somewhat. The SCUTREA selection panel was made up of eight selectors, including the three SCUTREA officers, and five other members of the planning group. All selection panels worked to a set of seven agreed criteria, including one which asked applicants to address the theme of the conference.

Once papers had been selected, it became clear that a few individuals wished to participate in the proceedings without writing a paper. In a conference exploring the crossing of borders and breaking of boundaries, it would be somewhat contradictory if the borders and boundaries were rigidly maintained and we therefore decided to encourage 'alternative' sessions. This has been a way of encouraging more active participation at the conference, permitting more flexible and diverse modes of delivery (including poster sessions), and more up to date contributions (bearing in mind that in order to publish these proceedings material has to be received and prepared for publication some time before the conference). Although these alternative sessions are not represented in this set of proceedings, we are confident that they will be evaluated as a very important component in the conference as a learning organisation.

Addressing the theme

So, how successful has this process been in ensuring that the papers included in these proceedings address the conference theme? As we emerge dazed from the editing and proof-reading of so many papers in a very short month, it is our impression that many authors paid little attention to our request — if we were marking essay or examination questions, we would take marks off for not reading the title or instructions carefully enough. And yet perhaps this is a harsh judgement to make about those who have been used to writing freely about a subject of their choosing. Perhaps we detect resistance from some — they were prepared to play the game as far as the abstract was concerned, but wanted to return to safe territory for the paper. Or perhaps what might have seemed a good idea in the abstract became over-ambitious in 3,500 words.

More generously, perhaps the reason for such wholesale ignoring of the theme might lie in its very nature — to write about crossing borders, breaking boundaries, might be for some too difficult in such a public forum. Perhaps many are faced with the professional difficulty of establishing nationality (and belonging) rather than exposing transgression and doubt. Whatever the reasons, the three of us were surprised at the number of individuals (sometimes even those who put 'boundaries' or 'borders' in the title) who ignored the conference theme.

We were, of course, concerned that we ensure coherent pairings of papers but we were confronted with the difficulty of this since our discovery that so many individuals moved away from the theme. As conference planners, we have done our best to ensure that pairings are coherent, but this was challenging where the focus of a paper is so narrow that we cannot find anyone else who has written, for example, on 'Organising part-time courses in cognitive psychology' or whatever.

On the other hand, we are fortunate to have many individuals who did address the issues of border transgression. A particularly strong focus on formal, informal and lifelong learning may be detected. Issues of rural and urban provision, campus and distance learning, workplace and campus modes of study and so on all put the theme to work. So too do papers about the boundaries between learning and therapy, learning and metaphor, learner and teacher.

Some authors address boundaries of cultural identity — class, race and gender, and their relation to power; others address issues of globalisation, particularly in relation to environmentalism. The boundaries between diversity and disadvantage are well visited as well as the borders encompassing adult education as pedagogy and as social action. A few focus on professional boundaries and practices. Even fewer visit the interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary border disputes, although the influence of post-modernism can be felt, particularly in the references!

We cannot, of course, undertake a review of all the papers at the conference — so we resolve this by mentioning no-one by name. Nevertheless, there are some outstanding and highly provocative papers which will be used in years to come as source material for arguments, teaching resources for postgraduate students and photocopied handouts that become grey with reproduction. The proceedings for the 1988 conference were a best seller — we sold our last copy last year — and we are sure that these will come to symbolise a momentous conference.

We intend to bring out a CD-ROM later in the summer which contains all the SCUTREA proceedings for the last twenty-seven years. We hope this will be an accessible and research-friendly tool for those concerned with the education of adults.

Personal notes

We should take this opportunity to thank all of those who have supported our commitment to turning our experience into learning. It is not possible to list everybody, but we are sure that the others will not mind us mentioning those who have supported the academic planning of this conference well beyond the call of duty. In alphabetical order, Ian Baptiste, Roseanne Benn, David Boud, Stephen Brookfield, Ian Bryant, Ron Cervero, Sean Courtney, Phyllis Cunningham, Richard Edwards, Andrew Gonczi, Barry Hake, Cheryl Hunt, David Jones, Athalinda MacIntosh, Gerald Normie, Kjell Rubenson, Sue Scott, Bruce Spencer, John Taylor, Richard Taylor, Teddy Thomas, Libby Tisdell, Tom Valentine and Michael Welton. Thanks also to Rod Allen for design advice, dinner and other generous support. We have already acknowledged the generous support of NIACE, Routledge and Taylor and Francis towards the costs of the production of this rather large volume of conference proceedings.

We must also be thankful for the labours of Rabinder Bery, Peter Burtt-Jones, and above all for her cool efficiency and controlled effectiveness, Debbie Marsh — all of the Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, Birkbeck College, University of London — without which this conference could not have been constructed at all.

A curious postscript is that although Paul and Nod have attended SCUTREA conferences since 1979, and Miriam since 1981, this is the first time they have had experience of participating together in a conference in a Britain governed by the Labour Party. It is probably no accident that the only way that Labour has succeeded in taking power is through crossing borders and blurring boundaries. Our first indications are that this government will prove to be more amenable to adult education, to lifelong learning, and to global relationships. As well as the signing of the European Social Chapter and a commitment to increased foreign aid, Britain will soon be back in UNESCO.

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Papers

A reconceptualisation of marginality: perspectives of African-American female faculty in the white academy

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African-American female faculty continue to be underrepresented in White research universities (National Center for Education Statistics 1994). Those who make entry find themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy and are among the least likely to be tenured (Collins 1986). Consequently, they are classified as a marginal group. Despite major obstacles, a few African-American women are receiving tenure and promotion and are becoming professionals of high regard in the White research academy. The purpose of the study of the professional development history of tenured African American female faculty was to gain insight into the experiences that contributed to their successful career in the White research academy. More specifically, the study explored the influence of the Black culture and the White dominant culture on the professional development experiences of the participants, their experiences in the White academic culture, and the strategies they use to successfully navigate their dual cultures. This presentation focuses primarily on the participants' conceptualisaton of their marginality in White-dominated cultures.

Theoretical perspective

African Americans face the dilemma of double consciousness as they struggle to survive in two distinct cultural worlds — one White and one Black (Hopkins 1987, Dubois 1903). The Black life-world consists of the Black community with its demands and expectations of professional women. The White life-world is made up of the White institutional structures — the school and the workplace — within which African American women must interact and survive in order to develop professionally.

To understand the historical process of these women's interactions with the White dominant institutional culture, I drew on the bicultural life structure theory to guide this study. The bicultural perspective focuses attention on the interplay between the two cultures and its effect on the lives of racial minority workers (Jones 1986, 86). Bi-cultural life structure theory stresses the interrelationships of the individual and the environment as key determinants in the developmental processes. Wolfe, O'Connor, and Cary (1990) define life structure as 'the underlying pattern or design of a person's life at any given time ... It allows one to adapt to one's surroundings' (p. 958).

A bicultural life experience requires that an African American woman create a dynamic, fluid life structure that shapes the patterns of her social interactions, relationships, and mobility, both within and between the two cultural contexts (Bell 1987, 463). Such a structure allows her to hold on to her African American identity as she interacts with the White-dominated culture. It also allows her to define her own reality and to dispel the theoretical myths that surround her existence in White-dominated institution, to include the theory of marginality and its application to Black professional women.

Current conceptualisation of the theory of marginality

Robert E. Park (1928) and Stonequist (1961) theorise that individuals who belong to more than one cultural world, either through migration or of being of mixed cultural heritage, should be considered marginal people. Park suggests that marginality leads to psychological conflict, a divided self and a disjointed personality. Stonequist contends that marginality has certain social and psychological properties. The social properties include the factors of migration and racial differences and situations in which two or more cultures share the same geographical area with one culture maintaining a higher status than the other. The psychological properties, similar to DuBois' (1903) concept of double consciousness, consist of the simultaneous awareness of oneself as being a member and an alien of two or more cultures. Stonequist suggests that the individual who leaves one social group or culture without making a satisfactory adjustment to another finds himself on the margin of each, but a member of neither. He is a marginal man (1961, 2).

Stonequist contends that wherever there are cultural transitions and cultural conflict, one will find marginal beings with dual personalities . Stonequist sees this dual personality to be quite problematic for Blacks because 'Blacks have not a traditional culture of their own' (1961, 106). He argues that Blacks are forced to express themselves in the only culture they know — that of White America. 'This means that the Negro efforts to improve himself and his race necessitate his becoming more like the White man, not in differentiating himself. By equalling the White man, he demonstrates his ability and refutes the stigma of inferiority' (p. 107). He suggests that it is by equalling himself with the White man that the Black person is thrown into a marginal status. Stonequist (1961) also contends that it is the advanced and educated Blacks who suffer most acutely from feelings of marginality.

According to Stonequist's and Park's arguments, professional Black women are marginal in White-dominated institutions; and such marginality generates ambiguity, identity confusion, and feelings of inferiority. The findings from my study of African American tenured female faculty in White research universities do not support Park's and Stonequist's arguments. The purpose of this paper is to present another conceptualisation of marginality from the perspectives of African-American women who successfully navigate their bicultural life-worlds without the negative psychological effects Stonequist and Park predict.

Methodological perspective

To examine Park's and Stonequist's theories of marginality as it relates to African American professional women, I used a qualitative approach as I explored the subjective experiences of African American tenured female faculty in the White research academy. To understand the process by which these women make meaning of their bicultural experiences, I drew on the interpretive interactionist perspective. This research perspective integrates, among other concepts, feminist inquiry and biography to examine and interpret the various experiences that make up everyday life. Like interpretive interactionism, feminist research situates the researcher's subjective experience as part of the text. Feminist researchers note that 'being an insider of the experience enabled them to understand what some women have to say in a way that no outsider could' (Reinharz 1992, 261). My own experience as a Black female faculty at a predominantly White academic institution contributed to my understanding of the experiences of other African American women in White institutions of higher education.

Method

This interpretive study took a biographical or life history approach as each participant and I attempted the reconstruction of her bicultural lives to discover the socio-structural experiences contributing to her successful career in the White academy. Each woman's socio-structural experiences result from her interactions with her socio-structural life-worlds of family, community, institution, and the wider society. In order to understand the totality of the women's experiences, I examined each life within its socio-cultural contexts. Open-ended participatory interviewing was the only method of data collection. The sample for this study consisted of five tenured African American female faculty from a major White research university The five study participants — Elizabeth, Jean, Kendra, Myra, and Sara — made up the total population of African American tenured female faculty at that institution. They ranged in ages 45-51 and came from diverse disciplines to include Journalism, Social Work, Anthropology, and Engineering.

Analytical techniques

To understand and interpret the experiences of African American female faculty in White research universities, I analysed the data in three ways. First, I studied each woman's narratives to capture the uniqueness of her story and constructed a case narrative of her story. Second, I isolated each significant experience within each woman's story and appended it to a separate file. To capture the complexity of her experience, I then analysed and situated each story within the socio-structural context of family, community, institution, or society. Third, I conducted a thematic analysis of each of the appended stories. After I had analysed all the interviews, I prepared a summary of themes outlining the enabling, disabling and stabilising experiences within each context that influenced the lives of the participants. From this process I was able to identify the early developmental experiences that influenced the lives of the participants, their enhancing and disabling experiences in the White research academy, and the adaptive procedures they employ to successfully navigate the White academic culture.

Reframing marginality

One of the most illuminating findings of this study is the manner in which the participants empower themselves through positive self-definition. Self-definition for the Black woman is an independent self-derived point of view about the meaning of her realities. These self-definitions enabled the women to use African-derived conceptions of themselves to resist negative evaluations of Black womanhood advanced by dominant groups. The women's positive self-definition was manifested through the concepts (1) creative marginality, (2) cultural identity, (3) safe space, and (4) rejection of external definitions.

Creative marginality

When I asked the study participants to comment on their marginality in the White institution, their perception of their marginality did not fit Park's and Stonequist's definition of the theory. Park's notion that a marginal individual is one who is on the margin of two cultures and two societies does not reflect the findings of this study. This study found that the participants did not see themselves on the margin of their two cultures but active participants of both cultures. Although they are outside their collegial group within the institution, their active involvement in their academic community as well as their participation in their Black cultural community make them central players in both life-worlds.

Park also suggests that marginality leads to psychological conflict, a divided self, and a disjointed personality. His statement denotes that marginality is something to be avoided because of the problems that result from such experiences. Contrary to

Park's suggestion, the participants define their marginality as a positive attribute. To them, it is a privilege to be marginal. Myra uses the term 'creative marginality' to describe her outsider-within stance in the dominant culture. She explained that her marginality allows her to move freely in her various life-worlds because of her competence in them all. Myra used a discussion she had with another Black woman to explain her creative marginality.

> I talked to a woman at the ski summit, and we were talking about being in the box or being outside the box. She said, 'her image of herself is standing on the edge of a cube. It's like the box is at an angle and she is standing on the edge as opposed to being in the box; she is dancing on the edge' ... That's exactly how I like being marginal.

Elizabeth also made reference to the box and noted,

> Some people try to put me in a box, but it does not affect what I try to build on; I refuse to be in a box.

Andre Lorde (1984) notes that in order to survive, those of us for whom oppression is as American as apple pie have always had to be watchers. The watching generates a dual consciousness in African American women, one in which Black women become familiar with the language and manners of the oppressor (in Collins 1991, 91). Being on the edge of the box provides Black women with a special angle of vision from which to watch and learn the behaviour of the dominant group. Standing on the edge of the box as opposed to being in the box affords the participants the freedom to navigate their various cultural worlds without the constraints of any particular world. Collins (1991) suggests that our outsiders-within position in the dominant culture places us in a unique position in that, we have 'a distinct view of the contradictions between the dominant group's actions and ideologies' (p. 11). As Sara noted, 'We know everything about them, and they know nothing about us. We are in a very special position.' Because of the privilege of knowing, watching, seeing, and learning that our marginality affords us, Collins (1991) suggests that we embrace it and not be restrained or threatened by it.

When I asked Jean, the only African-American dean at a major White research university about her marginality in the institution, she responded,

> No, I won't allow myself to feel marginal ... You don't want to talk to me, I don't want to talk to you, and I mean it. I can keep my distance and I can sit in a meeting and not say anything and still feel secure about what my real job is. No, I won't allow them to make me feel marginal if that is what they are trying to do. If I ever feel that it is too much, I know how to brush off my vitae and move on.

Because of the current conceptualisation of marginality — inferiority, victim, subordinate, psychologically damaged, void of culture — these women refuse to take ownership of the term as such definitions do not represent their perceptions of themselves.

Cultural identity and marginality

The findings from this study refute Park's and Stonequist's notion that marginality is problematic and causes psychological conflict. It also refutes the popular belief that Black women, because of their under represented status in the White academy, are a marginal group. Marginality is a state of mind and can become problematic if one lacks a strong sense of cultural identity. If one is rooted in her culture and has a definite sense of herself and her place in that culture, then I argue that she will perceive her marginality as a positive attribute rather than as a handicap. Myra, for example, attributes her Black cultural identity to her positive interactions within her family and community life-worlds. She said,

> I was always aware of Black people and White people. I don't think I ever had any identity crisis about who I wanted to be, and I think it's because when I first started growing up in [my first neighbourhood] all Black folks talked to each other. White people were not people to look up to; they just lived there. They were the other people of society. I always had a sense of difference. I never thought I was the same as them, ever.

Articulating a similar sentiment, Sara said, 'I think I absolutely grew up with that very knowledge that I was Black.' The women grew up in nurturing Black environments where Black cultural pride was part of their ancestral and community legacies. They knew that as Black people, they were different from White people. They had this unique sense of difference. They did not see themselves as subordinate to White people, but as different from White people, and that this difference did not make them subordinate.

Stonequist (1961) suggests that in order for Blacks to be successful, they have to become more like the White man, and it is by trying to equal themselves to the White man that they are thrown in a marginal position. When I asked Jean, an executive officer, about the myth that women in leadership positions must emulate the behaviours of White men in order to be competitive with that group, she remarked, 'I couldn't behave like anything other than who I am. That wouldn't be real, and I have a hard time carrying on unreal stuff. That makes me very uncomfortable. I think I can be who I am and what I am, but it does not hurt to know how some people might play the game. I think awareness is important, but I don't think I have to emulate anybody's behaviour.' Through her watching, observing, and becoming aware of the way the dominant group plays the game, Jean develops her own strategy, based on her self-defined standpoint, for playing and winning the game. By being aware of how others play the game, the participants develop the competence necessary to successfully perform roles in the dominant culture — a major contributor to their success in the academy.

Use of safe space

The use of a safe space was found to be a method by which the women preserve their conception of their marginality when the environment becomes disconcerting. Elizabeth, for example, does not allow herself to feel marginal in the institution. She noted,

> I won't allow myself to feel marginal. I guess if this meant more to me, if it were my whole life, and perhaps I may have a different view of it, but it's only part of my life... I love my work, but this is not my main life ... I am very happy with my family. I have my husband and my daughter and we are very happy, we have lots of fun together. We have a beautiful home to come to; this is not my only reality. When this becomes too much, I can go home and forget it, at least for a while.

Elizabeth's home and family provide her with a safe space where she can escape others' definition of her marginality. By periodically detaching her professional self from her private self, she protects her definition of who she is as a Black woman while she successfully navigates her Black family life-world and her White academic life-world.

Rejection of external definition

The women in this study, through their refusal to accept others' definition of their blackness and femaleness, are breaking down the negative images that thwart their successful existence in the dominant culture. They define themselves as survivors and their survival depends on their definition of their own identity and on their rejection of stereotypical images of themselves as Black women. Myra, for example noted, 'There is oppression,...but my attitude is not victim of oppression but somebody who is privileged to be part of the most dynamic cultures on this planet.'

When I questioned Jean about her token status as the only African American dean in the history of her major White institution, she replied,

> This notion of being a token, I don't buy that; that doesn't mean people don't see me that way, probably my colleagues especially here at this university ... I have felt they are very lucky to have me, and that's because no one has given me anything. I have paid my dues, and I feel pretty secure about what I do.

Jean's refusal to allow others' perception of her place within her collegial group to influence her self-definition is a classic example of the women's refusal to be objectified as subordinate Others. Sara, also noted,

> Oh, I just refuse to be what people want me to be. No, I won't do that. I know a lot of times, I don't feel necessarily that I fit in. You almost have to force yourself to stop being self-conscious about that and view it really as their problem. I do not allow myself to be marginalised by this other group because it's their problem, not mine.

By refusing to take ownership of the dominant group's definition of them as subordinate or marginalised Others, the women are dismantling the negative images that surround them and are creating and maintaining their own positive definitions of themselves — definitions that portray the uniqueness of their combined categories, female and Black. bell hooks (1989) asserts that 'as subjects, people have the right to define their own reality, establish their own identities, name their history....As objects, one's reality is defined by others, one' identity created by others, one's history named only in ways that define one's relationship to those who are subject' (p. 42). This perspective from which the participants view their marginality was found to be a central element in Black women's definition of themselves as survivors with the ability to float in and out of different class and ethnic cultures and still emerge with a strong sense of who they are as Black women. Instead of accepting Park's and Stonequist's definition of their marginality as disabling, they reconstructed their own definition to reflect positive rather than negative images of their marginal status in White-dominated cultures.

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Freire, Gramsci and globalisation: some implications for social and political commitment in adult education

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Many of us use the term 'globalisation' without any critical analysis. In this short space, we cannot do full justice to such an analysis, but we can raise some important points. We find it useful to think about globalisation in terms of two different but interrelated realities. First, there is the material world that either does or does not give truth to the term. We then need to consider the ideology of globalisation whilst also recognising that ideology can become a material force.

Let us begin with a consideration of whether 'globalisation' is a new phenomenon. We return to what Marx and Engels said in 1848 in the *Communist Manifesto*:

> The need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the whole surface of the globe. It must nestle, everywhere, settle everywhere, establish connections everywhere. The bourgeoisie has, through its exploitation of the world-market, given a cosmopolitan character to production and consumption in every country ... it has drawn from under the feet of industry the national ground on which it stood ... In place of the old wants satisfied by the productions of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes. In place of the old local and national seclusion and self-sufficiency, we have intercourse in every direction, universal interdependence of nations (in McLellan 1997, 224).

Their words sound very similar to those of our contemporaries who claim that globalisation is a recent capitalist phenomenon. When read in its total context, it is clear that the point Marx and Engels are making is that globalisation is an inherent tendency within the dialectical development of capitalism and a tendency with important implications for the international working class. Globalisation, according to Marx and Engels, can enslave the international working class or, alternatively, it can unite it as a revolutionary force on a global scale. These same alternatives underpin either the criticisms or advocacy of globalisation today.

If you want to consider contemporary empirical evidence and historical evidence of globalisation, we would refer you to excellent studies by a number of authors (Gordon 1988; Thrift 1986; Harman 1996). Here are a few conclusions reached by some of them. First and perhaps foremost, the phenomenon is not nearly as total as the term 'globalisation' implies. Many areas of the world are not included and the bulk of foreign direct investment flows from one region or nation of the industrially developed world to others in the same club. Some of these authors provide evidence that much greater surges in world trade occurred during earlier periods of capitalism's history (see especially Harman 1996). If they are right, why have some authors so readily accepted that this is a recent development?

Firstly, certain aspects of experience do seem and are more global than they may have ever been in the past. Besides the obvious media contribution of connecting us with some of the more distant parts of the globe (distant from wherever we stand), we think there are other features in operation which people feel or experience both directly and indirectly in their everyday lives. How much some of these are reality or necessity and how much they are down to a type of preparatory ideology is an important and urgent question. The kind of ruthless 'taken for granted' competition, often accompanied by very real anxiety and insecurity, is one feature which stalks the world, or a considerable part of it. Nevertheless, competition has always been an inherent and essential aspect of the logic of capitalism. Perhaps the most recent development is the introduction of competition into areas of work and especially professional services where it was once less acute. These areas produced products and services rather than commodities. Since the early eighties, Neo-liberalism has stressed the positive aspects of competition. It has constituted the dominant hegemonic discourse surrounding economic development and public policy, being a feature of the Pinochet regime's ideology, Thatcherism, Reaganomics (Pannu 1996, 87) and the IMF's and World Bank's 'structural adjustment programmes' in the 'Third World' (Pannu 1996; Boron and Torres 1996; Mulenga 1996).

The increasing commodification of social existence, whether it be the production of food in Africa and Asia or education in Europe, North America and elsewhere, is the second feature. It is, of course, interrelated with competition. There is far too little discussion of what this process does to the quality of the products or services or to how it affects those who labour in their production or to those who will consume the results. We contend that the commodification of a product of labour is a necessary prerequisite for drawing the worker, at whatever level of dexterous or intellectual skill, into the exploitative and dehumanising social relations of capitalist production. In those relations, people must be managed or organised to produce not an extra element that is given freely to those who receive their efforts but a surplus value to those who purchase their labour.

Another very real feature of current globalisation has been what Harvey (1989) refers to as 'time-space' compression. Enormous advances in telecommunications, together with the deregulation of the flow of financial capital, have enabled financial capital to pursue its need for profitability and capital accumulation within a much more global expanse. Nevertheless, as Harman (1996) points out, the footloose nature of financial capital is not the same thing as capitalist production moving in quite the same manner — that would be too expensive for capital. There are only, to date, a few sectors in industrial production which have moved all or some of their production processes to places where labour is cheaper and/or less well organised (Harman 1996; Thrift 1986). There are many other factors which the strategists of global capitalism must consider, and this is part of the reason why 'globalisation' is not as global or total as the term implies.

The second but inter-related reality of globalisation is the ideology of globalisation. We think ideology or any form of consciousness arises from social being or existence, but that it distorts our thinking because it pulls together, in explanations and ways of behaving and organising, only fragments or partial aspects of our experience, what Gramsci refers to as 'common sense'. Therefore, there is a dangerous 'ring of truth' which can martial our consent or at least resignation to the idea that there is no alternative. Ideologies thwart our efforts to understand and deal critically with our social conditions.

There are those on the left who see globalisation as having the potential for uniting humankind, as a means to promote social and environmental commitment. They forget that some of the features of globalisation, which theoretically could be exploited, as 'double edge swords', for transformative ends, is not total. These features are not accessible to the many nations, regions and especially people throughout the world who are being marginalised and who will never experience anything but the barbaric consequences of global capitalist development. In 'peripheralised nations', it is often the élites who first gain access to key aspects of this globalised culture while it is argued that the peasantry often remains tied to its own ethnic culture (see McLaren 1994, X11, X111). This offers possibilities for resistance and appropriation (McLaren 1994, X11, X111). There is always the danger, however, that one romanticises such pockets of alleged resistance. Some of the literature on the impact of the Neo-liberal globalisation project on the 'Third World' makes depressing reading. Structural adjustment has led to further impoverishment among the popular classes owing to such features as increasing privatisation and related cuts in public spending, besides increased user charges and cost recovery policies (negatively affecting popular access to health, education and other social services), a decline in real incomes (often making it prohibitive to pay for education and health services), deregulation of essential commodity prices and the shift from direct to indirect taxation (ex. VAT) (see Boron and Torres 1996; Pannu 1996; Mulenga 1996; McGinn 1996).

Then there are those of a more right wing persuasion, whether they recognise it or not, who think that globalisation is the inevitable present and future. Political positions follow from this interpretation. The nation state, for example, must surrender some of its political sovereignty to extra-national bodies — after all, the argument goes, it no longer has real control over its economy. At least, here, there is the implicit recognition that politics cannot be separated from economics which could be used to challenge one of the basic separations that has been integral to the liberal-democratic ideology of capitalism (Hall 1982). Perhaps, even worse, working people, for the preservation of their livelihoods, must resist at least certain types of union or collective organisation. The one collective organisation some workers can belong to is the firm itself which buys their loyalty through the pseudo-participation of 'worker-management' teams, involving 'workplace learning' — a characteristic of TQM. They and others will preserve their jobs and secure their futures only by working more intensively and by being willing to work longer, sometimes for unpaid periods of time. Here there is the forgetting or ignorance of the growing body of evidence that indicates that productivity and efficiency as exhibited by a workforce or individual worker is only one component of a total process that results in either a secure and/or a very insecure future for working people. The proponents of this version of the ideology ignore a great deal more which, unfortunately, we cannot discuss within this word limit.

Freire and Gramsci: implications for working within the realities of globalisation

We contend that, in order to infuse or re-infuse adult education with social and political commitment, we need educators who are willing to learn from and engage critically and creatively with the ideas of Paulo Freire and Antonio Gramsci. Peter has advocated, in other publications (copies available on request), a synthesis of Freire and Gramsci for transformative action. In some of her publications (copies available on request), Paula has emphasised the compatibility between their philosophical approaches to working educationally/politically with adults which, she argues, derives from a shared understanding of certain fundamental aspects of Marx's theory of consciousness and his ideas about socialism and communism which have, so far, never been fully realised and have often been offended in practice. Whilst Paula has never referred to this as a synthesis, Peter and Paula have hitherto demonstrated a commitment to a similar project. We have engaged with the ideas of both Freire and Gramsci to prepare educators who can work for a future in which people humanely and democratically create their own futures. Their ideas have offered us an approach to working educationally with people in order to enable them to develop a critical understanding of what is actually happening not just in terms of the single issue with which they might be concerned but of linking it with the totality of issues that constitute the oppressions of the world as well as the historical formation of the present and the future which could develop in the absence of the type of educational intervention we advocate. Again, we will have to be brief, but perhaps we can develop some of these points in future discussions.

We begin from the belief that human beings could create collectively and democratically a more just, what Freire calls a humanised world which qualitatively enriches all aspects of human existence as well as our relations with the rest of the natural world. We could become individuals with differences who contribute to the social collective, rather than the captives of selfish individualism. This idea of a creative process is drawn from our own experiences but informed and bolstered by Marx's actual meaning of socialism.

In terms of Freire and Gramsci, Paula places emphasis on their ontological and epistemological compatibilities. Marx's theory of consciousness or praxis called for a revolution in our thinking about theories of 'social being' and 'knowledge'. In the ontological case, this meant that our 'human nature' depended upon the social relations within which it developed: therefore, by creating humanised social relations, it would be far easier, maybe even almost automatic, to become better, more just and committed human beings. In the case of knowledge or consciousness, epistemology, the argument was that these arise from social existence; therefore we cannot fully challenge or critique current knowledge without changing our relationship to knowledge within changed relations of learning and working together in ways that challenge and oppose traditional and current forms of education.

Our declared faith in the ideas of these two figures does not render us oblivious to the difficulties that arise in seeking their relevance in an age of intense globalisation. Of the two, it is Gramsci who sought to grapple more comprehensively with the economic and cultural phenomena characterising the Capitalist social formation, given that his project was larger than Freire's and all encompassing. In his analysis of the specific changes in production occurring in his time, Gramsci draws on the Marxian tenet, in *Capital Vol.III*, that the 'tendency of Capitalist accumulation to increase the organic composition of Capital' (Hoare and Nowell Smith 1971, 280) will result in a fall in the rate of profit. Gramsci argues that Capitalism reorganises itself in an attempt to overcome this process. He saw 'Fordism' as a case of reorganisation by 'industry to overcome the law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall' (Gramsci, in Hoare and Nowell Smith 1971, 280). The Gramscian approach, therefore, would be to regard the Neoliberal project as the latest attempt by Capital to overcome the tendency observed and expounded on by Marx.

The potential impact of Capitalist reorganisation on the everyday life of industrial workers figured strongly in Gramsci's thinking in prison. There he formulated studies, often fragmentary, in an attempt to understand, among other things, the nature of the Italian post-Risorgimento State. His analysis renders a specific nation state the focus of potential action for social change. Yet, in the light of the leverage which international capital holds over the State through a process of intense globalisation (see Ross and Trachte 1990), we feel obliged to pose a few questions concerning the contemporary relevance of Gramsci's theory of power and the State. Is it still useful to talk in terms of limiting oneself to surrounding the State through a 'war of position' engaged in and across the entire complex of 'civil society', when the relationship between the State and power has to be seen, more than ever before, in the context of larger, powerful international forces? In this regard, would it be amiss to suggest that the Sorelian concept of the 'historic bloc', which Gramsci employs, must transcend its 'national-popular' character to entail an alliance of international movements? Can progressive social movements, often regarded as capable of providing a useful context for transformative adult education, serve as an important vehicle in this regard? Leslie Sklair indicates that they have often proved successful in disrupting the smooth accumulation of Capital locally but argues that they need to 'find ways of globalising these disruptions' (Sklair 1995, 507). It is those progressive social movements of an international character that strike us as being more likely to prove effective in this regard.

There is the danger, though, that movements can constitute a *deus ex machina*, as one desperately seeks new 'resources of hope' and agency. Furthermore, they, or rather some organisations or factions within them, can be essentialist. They would focus on specific and single issue politics, thus causing a fragmentation on the Left. Gramsci's view of alliances within a 'national popular' movement was also essentialist in the sense that it foregrounded the agency of the Northern Italian industrial proletariat. Freire's view of social change is less essentialist. He has departed from his earlier concentration on class to incorporate a broader and inclusionary view of social change predicated on a broad concept of social difference and identity (Freire 1994). Emancipatory adult education can play its part in creating links between the movements by promoting projects that do not encourage one voice at the expense of other voices but that are socially inclusive in terms of content, pedagogical style, teaching personnel and participants. Traditional sites of left-leaning education, like worker education agencies, need to embrace issues raised by social movements. The social movements can have the kind of transformative effect on these agencies that Gramsci expected the Factory Councils to have on the Italian trade unions (Gramsci, in Hoare 1978, 21).

The issues emerging from Gramsci's and Freire's work that appear relevant to any discussion on globalisation are many. Once again, we cannot do justice to the topic within the word limit. Take the issue of Language. Both Freire and Gramsci discuss the issue of standard language and local literacies. For instance, the insights provided by Freire, regarding the relationship between indigenous languages like Creole in Portugal's former African colonies and the dominant foreign language, and their implications for adult literacy programmes (Freire and Macedo 1987), become pertinent in an age when a few dominant languages continue to become globalised (Barton 1994). This often occurs at the expense of local languages and literacies, some of which have become 'endangered species ' (Barton, 1994). And yet, one feels compelled to safeguard and valorise the indigenous without discarding the dominant, standard language, knowledge of which, according to both Freire and Gramsci, prevents people from remaining at the periphery of political life. Freire's challenge to critical educators is to teach the dominant language in a problematising manner.

Gramsci advocates the subaltern groups' critical appropriation of the dominant and mass popular cultures. Many of these cultural products constitute features of what can now be regarded as a globalised Eurocentric culture. The productions involved can be interpreted 'against the grain' in a process of counter-hegemonic action (this partly explains Gramsci's impact on British Cultural Studies). And what of the kind of Freirean approaches to community theatre promoted by Augusto Boal's 'Theatre of the Oppressed'? Does such participative community theatre, characterised by praxis and involving spectactors, serve as an adult learning alternative to the kind of globalised 'codifications' beamed by global networks which induce activity only in the sense that, like all texts, they are open to various interpretations and multiple readings — nothing more? Does Freirean community theatre, à la Boal, represent a radical adult education attempt at asserting and valorising individual and collective identities, shaped through authentic dialogue, in the face of globalised Eurocentric productions?

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The changing role of women in the migration process

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Until the 1970s, mainstream sociology failed to recognise that the main constituting and transforming element of migration flows — both inward and outward — is not the success or failure to assimilate individuals to the norms of western industrial societies, but rather a process I call the 'dialectics of family-centredness'. Through the focal position that women hold in the family project, a position they have acquired historically in virtually all societies, women play a dominant as opposed to a peripheral role within the migration process.

In the following I should like, firstly, to briefly recapitulate the 'sociological perspective' on women's migration. Secondly, I shall present some empirical studies that identify women as subjects and protagonists of migration processes, and, thirdly, I shall address the debate on equality and differences in migration processes and draw some conclusions regarding the role of women migrants in the European labour market.

The sociological perspective on women's migration

The central issues in German and Swiss migration research since the early 1970s have been acculturation, assimilation and deculturation — that is, research has been based in key respects on the assumption that migrants should be understood as members of certain cultures of origin. The concept of assimilation draws on the notion of 'culture change' inspired by cultural anthropology and commonly entertained in the USA since the 1930s. Acculturation, in the classic definition formulated by Redfield and Herskovits in 1936, encompasses certain phenomena that are generated through direct and persistent contact between groups from different cultures, with such contact giving rise to changes in the cultural models of one or both groups (Redfield and Herskovits 1936, 149). This very definition is itself an illustration of the basic problems inherent in applying the notion of culture to the migration debate. There is an underlying assumption that cultures should be understood as monolithic and separate. Internal gender differentiation, for example, is generalised from the outset, if referred to at all; women, through their special ties to family and tradition, are seen as bearers of the culture of origin in its purer form. This conception leads to the idea of migration causing 'culture shock', 'culture change stress' and 'cultural lag'. Attention is focused on the 'deficits' that arise through migration, while migration theories are conceived of as the basis on which to compensate for or surmount cultural deficits. Family-centredness is thus viewed as a special obstacle to modernisation.

The first West German studies that explicitly addressed the situation of women migrants — especially in the context of social work and migration research on children — were based on this cultural paradigm. This led to typifications in terms of differentials in modernity, discontinuities in modernity and the more or less successful assimilation to Western values (Schmidt-Koddenberg 1989). Women appear doubly disadvantaged on account of their culture and gender. Orientation to employment and the family are viewed as two diametrically opposite poles on the modernisation scale (Taravella 1984).

If we look beyond the situation in Germany, we can discern a decisive change since the mid-1970s in the approach taken by researchers to the social situation of women migrants. 1984 saw the publication in Paris of a first comprehensive international bibliography on *Les femmes migrantes 1965-1983*, in which the author, Louis Taravella, saw the immigration controls imposed since the economic crisis of 1974 as a crucial factor behind a new awareness of immigration problems.

This crisis of the global economy was accompanied by attempts to stop the very migration flows from countries on the European periphery to the major cities that had previously been encouraged by government immigration agencies. These efforts to stem immigration have an unintended social effect similar to those that had been observed previously in Great Britain after immigration from Commonwealth countries was subjected to strict controls. Restrictive legislation in Great Britain since 1962 'compelled migrants to take decisions in favour of permanent settlement that they would probably not have taken otherwise' (Watson 1980, 43f). Temporary migration become final emigration, because a return from the country of origin to the host country was now beset with problems. As a result, other members of the family come to join those who have already emigrated, while second- and third-generation youths attend schools in the host country and try to gain access to the indigenous labour market.

The dialectics of family-centredness; women as protagonists of the migration project

What, empirically speaking, is the relationship between work and family among women of the first and second generation? In Taravella's description of the 'feminisation' of European migration since the mid-1970s, one is struck by the fact that the presence of migrant women in the labour market was not really acknowledged until these women were perceived as having a Muslim culture. In fact, women in post-war Europe were often protagonists of internal migration and migration flows within the EC that were not subject to immigration controls. In French sociology, this was remarked upon here and there *en passant* as early as the 1960s, as in Bourdieu's 1962 study on predominantly female migration from rural areas of France (Bordieu 1962). In the 1980s, Piselli (1980) and Arlacchi (1989) studied the kinship structures and cultural roots of the Calabrian Mafia in Italy, showing that migration is often chosen (especially by women) as an alternative to falling victim to regressive developments in the regions of origin. Mirjana Morokvasic's study in former Yugoslavia found that 'in a milieu where unwritten laws have drawn the boundaries of acceptable behaviour for women, where only certain categories of women are socially accepted..., survival is very difficult for those women who have violated these rules or who do not fall into one of the socially accepted categories. If this situation is coupled with the impossibility of an independent livelihood, many women see emigration as one or even the only way to escape from this predicament (Morokvasic 1989, 77f).

A biographical study I carried out with 40 Italian women in the Rhine-Main area of Germany showed, however, that it is quite typical for women in extreme situations, also with several small children of infant and school age, to provide the crucial impetus for the whole family to migrate, even for the second and third time after the return home proved fruitless, or that they migrate with several small children before the husband and take on work (Apitzsch 1990a).

There is also very clear and statistically documented evidence of the widespread resistance offered by women to any return to their regions of origin. Most first-generation women migrants will verbally profess that they intend to return home at some stage, at the latest when they retire. The statistics suggest otherwise, however. According to a UN study carried out in 1979 entitled *Labour Supply and Migration in Europe*[1], for about every 100 men of a particular nationality who return home, there were 82 women in the case of Greeks, and only 44 Italian women. It is obvious that this trend has not weakened to this day, as shown by the current statistics on male and female migrants leaving the host country on reaching retirement age. Women seem to prefer living with their children and grandchildren in migration, even in cramped living quarters, to a life in their own house in their home village[2].

What factors account for this peculiarly ambivalent orientation of women to the family project, on the one hand, and to the host society, on the other? From the results of the biographical study I conducted, I would no longer speak of a 'field-specific orientation' (to family and occupation) among second-generation women migrants, but rather a 'dialectic of family orientation'. Whereas male youths are exempted from all duties within the family and orient themselves very early on to their peer group — mostly within the particular ethnic colony — girls, especially the oldest ones in each family, bear the main burden of domestic labour when both parents work. Katharina Ley has shown that the employment rate of women migrants during the family phase was always much higher than that of Swiss women. A declining employment rate is due, as Czarina Wilpert and Maria Eleonora Karsten have shown, not to a lack of employment orientation, but to factors that push such women into insecure employment (Karsten 1987, 9-18).

A peculiar development now occurs among girls with this experience: the more intensive their responsibility for the family, the more likely they are to evaluate the emigration project on their own terms, to perform a summary evaluation of their situation and to take corrective action. In other words, those young people who realise through their involvement in the family that each year of emigration diminishes further their chances of successfully returning home are under more pressure to seek a successful outcome to the migration project in the host society. Girls are quite clear in their own minds that they cannot expect any assistance from the ethnic colony.

By contrast, those young people who are traditionally exempted from family duties and responsibilities — and we have every reason to assume that this applies for the majority of males — can only utilise their scope for action under the conditions of migration by casting themselves in the role of outsider, by playing with deviance careers, etc. In any case, they can be quite certain that the institutions of the ethnic colony will at least provide them with a basic livelihood in casual, temporary jobs. Many of these young men attempt at an early age to form ties through traditional marriage, and in this way escape from the nascent anomie in their situation. Biographical studies have also showed, however, that second-generation women migrants are reluctant to accept such traditional ties, and that they try to engineer a 'contract' in which they have a very strong position.

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[1] In *Economic Survey of Europe*, Part II. Geneva 1979

[2] Amt ftir multikulturelle Angelegenheiten der Stadt Frankfurt (ed.) (1992) *Eine statistische Erfassung der dlteren Arbeitsmigrantinnen und -migranten in Frankfurt.* Frankfurt am Main. Donald Vaughan (1996) *Migration and Biography: Elder Migrants in Frankfurt am Main.* (Manuscript).

These observations offer a plausible hypothesis for interpreting the astonishing differences in school performance between migrant boys and girls. Whereas second-generation migrant girls attain virtually the same standards as German girls by the time they leave school, according to all existing statistics, migrant boys display enormous deficits[3].

This finding is substantiated by the biographical study I carried out, which showed that women migrants tend to pin all their hopes on education. Mothers try, through their daughters, to achieve their own frustrated hopes of escaping the eternal cycle of subordination. Very often, the father's refusal to allow his daughter an appropriate education leads to full-blown rebellion within the family. It is not unusual in such cases for women to leave their husbands and take the children with them. Women migrants from EU countries, for example, are not reliant on their husband having a residence permit. (Immigrant women from non-EU countries are dependent on their husbands having such a permit, which means they lack the autonomy to determine their place of residence).

These observed cases of 'family revolts', particularly in connection with a daughter's education, are by no means confined to non-Muslim families. Violaine des Villers's film about young Algerian women in Brussels, *La tête a l'envers*, which was produced in 1993 for 'Arte', the German-French TV channel, provides some beautiful examples. One of the young women portrayed in the film was born in Belgium; her parents are from the Maghreb, and illiterate. The mother decides to leave her Muslim husband when he refuses to buy his daughter the things she needs for school. The daughter is now a sports teacher in the St. Gil district of Brussels, where the film shows her training young people from the district — predominantly of North African origin — on the flying trapeze. 'Teaching little Moroccan boys ... was difficult', she says, 'the children can't look you in the eyes at first ... they have not been brought up to look up to women ... but their view changes ...'. Their view has to change, because the boys must trust their teacher if they do not want to fall from the trapeze. One of the assistants in the gymnasium had left her Kabyle village with her family only four years previously (that is, before the interview took place) and had come to Brussels via Turin. 'There are things where I wouldn't give in', she says, 'for example, if my husband tried to push me into giving up my career and my independence'. She also indicates, quite clearly, that such rebellious thinking had developed prior to emigrating. Back in her home village, she tries to relate to tribal traditions in a very reflective manner. This woman migrant is proud of her Berber traditions and shows some very beautiful photographs of her grandmother in traditional dress. She is equally proud of a picture showing a piece of Berber graffiti on a police station wall: 'If my thoughts were a man, they would have to imprison me'.

Another common feature in these narratives is the hope that education will increase women's chances on the labour market. All these girls share a diffuse anxiety that they have no real chances of being integrated into the labour market according to universal criteria, but they are unsure about how best to respond. Despite having a good education, they suddenly disappear from the occupational statistics, where they play a marginal role, also in relation to male youths with the same ethnic background. The gender-specific segmentation of the labour market, as also applies for German women, operates more intensively in their case. Indeed, German women need the domestic services of immigrant women as a prerequisite for getting the good jobs.

At this point I should like to address the differences between women, in this case German and immigrant women, and consider the question of 'divided' sisterhood.

Consequences for the role of women in the European labour market and adult education

Although there are approximately six million women migrants in Europe, migration studies and women's studies, particularly in Germany, have directed little or no attention to the relationship between migration and ethnic subordination.

The 'housewife' thesis, which viewed all women without distinction as victims of patriarchal relations, thereby neglecting economic dependencies and the specific mechanisms of racial subordination, operated for a long time as a barrier to any wider perspective. In Veronica Bennholdt-Thomsen's 1987 study on employment among immigrant Turkish women, for example, we read that 'within this framework, the financial independence acquired by women with their own source of income has very little value. Their powerlessness to determine their own lives is paralleled by an inability to dispose of their own labour power' (Bennholdt-Thomsen 1987, 28). Empirical examples for the oppression of Islamic women (which includes physical violence) serve only to substantiate such a thesis; there is no attempt to analyse the way in which biographies differ. The discrimination experienced by immigrant women in the modern host society in the form of 'ethnifying' distinctions in the entire occupational structure is interpreted as a further level of oppression, additional to the sexist oppression experienced by all women.

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[3] The data acquired during the 1970s and 1980s are confirmed in an impressively confirmed in Mona Granato (1994) *Bildungs- und Lebenssituation junger Italiener*. Eds.: Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung

The 'race, culture and difference' debate in Great Britain and the USA in recent years (Brah 1993) has shown, very convincingly, that gender-based social inequalities are not just reinforced by social inequalities based on origin, but that these inequalities are produced anew and in a very specific way by society. The social definition of gender and the ascription of 'cultural identity' by the host society are interwoven in a complex way — the issue, however, is always the specific ways in which social power is used to oppress others. When marginalised groups adopt the same definitions of themselves, they are effectively supporting such subordination mechanisms. Giovanna Campani (1992), in her study on Philippine women in Italy, has put forward the thesis that Italian women owe their higher qualifications to more than 100,000 Philippine and other immigrant women from the 'Third World' who care for their families as domestic servants. In Germany, the situation is probably no different. According to estimates by the Collaborative Research Centre 333 in Munich ('Changes in the individual division of labour'), there are perhaps 2.4 million women in West Germany working in private households in insecure jobs that do not appear in the official statistics. Immigrant women probably account for a high proportion of that total. Maria Rerricht (1992) has put forward the thesis (very similar to Campani's for Italy) that West German women have only been able to establish a presence for themselves on the primary labour market at the expense of increasing employment of illegal women migrants (and she refers to similar trends in the USA, as exposed in the famous 'Nannygate' affair).

The question, therefore, is whether the successful German, English or Italian woman with her immigrant servants to look after her children (and who may even be a sociologist conducting research on these immigrant women) can show any simple form of 'women's' solidarity. This is a rhetorical question, of course, but there is nothing rhetorical about its converse. Does this state of affairs means that there can only be particularist agreement between women along the boundaries of social and ethnic origin? Is there a split within feminism between 'white feminism' and 'black feminism' (with 'black' and 'white' understood by the protagonists as *political* distinctions)? If this were the case, what other basis could there be for a shared perception besides ritualised accusations and self-incrimination? Is the way to escape these rituals, as many deconstructivist feminists propose (Knowles and Mercer 1993, 111), to stop raising political demands for individuals, but to base demands from case to case in terms of 'issues', where ligatures can exist between the individuals affected? Could the social subordination of immigrant women be combated in this way at all? Or would the best alternative consist in a general denunciation of private social services with no personal 'blame' attached to such exploitation of others?

Caroline Knowles and Sharmila Mercer from Great Britain have described beautifully the social impacts of the typical moralist reaction among the left-wing middle class to this problem. The latter demand that men and women share domestic labour and be active in 'parent-run community nurseries'. What is actually achieved, however, by the parents' initiative in Hackney used as an example? The only parents who can effectively join the initiative are teachers, other people with good public-service jobs, or the self-employed. Women in full-time employment, especially single mothers, are systematically excluded, and yet single mothers account for the majority of immigrant families. This leads to the paradoxical problem that immigrant women are in particular need of the very same professionalised social services that they themselves provide at present — often in insecure employment. If indigenous and immigrant women were to share a common aim, this would consist, for example, in securing and socialising personal social services instead of moralistically demanding their abolition, and ensuring that such services are also available to the providers themselves. The same principle could apply, moreover, to hospital services, private households and community initiatives.

If this thinking is correct, then the issue for intercultural adult education is neither to assimilate 'foreigners' to indigenous traditions, nor to exercise a form of tolerance that is essentially indifferent to foreigners. The point is to recognise that those who are marginalised in a variety of spheres (for example, in social security, education, etc.) actually shape the socio-ecological foundations of shared social reality to a major extent, without themselves having an opportunity to address and process the specific knowledge that they acquire through their own activities. This is the case in both the social and cultural domains. Helma Lutz (1995), in her studies on Surinam women in the Netherlands, has shown that rules of life originating from a totally different context can be activated and revised in the modern host society, thus acquiring a specific meaning in the new context. The 'moral economy of kin' among descendants of female slaves, for whom family ties were impossible and where the woman as worker and single mother played a central role, generates a 'Golden Rule' for the daughters, according to which the latter should always manage without the financial and emotional help of men. The fact that the necessity of such autonomy has been propagated for some time now by the women's movement in the West makes it easier for immigrant women to legitimate their own maxim and to arrive at a successful assessment of migration as a project in their lives.

However, it would be wrong to ignore the fact that the potential autonomy to act on the part of women migrants — as acquired, for example, through education and career success — is certainly very limited, and that these constraints are closely interwoven with the cumulative effects of social restratification and gender-specific disadvantages. We often see among women migrants that the greater level of motivation to acquire education generated by their specific social knowledge is not accompanied by appropriate opportunities to plan their educational careers in a competent manner. Although the host society expects them to take advantage of the very autonomy that migration promises, the double character of education as an agency of modernisation and at the same time as a system of social ascription of roles is often overlooked (Apitzsch 1990b).

For educational work, however, it is important to realise the capacity of women migrants to link modern dispositions to their own biographical resources and to utilise as well as change and dissolve traditional social forms, and hence to exert a type of feedback that changes the underlying structures of the host society.

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The end of discipline? Epistemological shifts in the study of the education of adults

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Looking back to the last occasion that SCUTREA hosted an international conference in 1988 — the TransAtlantic Dialogue — the world was a different place, but it was a world that was already changing. Across the world, borders were being crossed, and boundaries were being broken. The world of the academic was not free from the effects of the blurring of boundaries, although we were only just beginning to feel the breeze of the winds of change, through looking 'across the pond', and peering through the pre-tunnel Channel, academics in Britain probably had a good idea what was coming, particularly in the world of adult and continuing education. In adult education, we were beginning to sense an increasing crisis of identity.

This paper seeks to begin to document that change, and to go on to consider implications for the future. The analysis intentionally focuses on SCUTREA conferences, though where there are significant benchmarks outside the conference then these will also be referred to, in trying to understand the shift from boundary maintenance to border crossing. In particular, this review using papers from SCUTREA conferences over the past 27 years, will seek to pinpoint and account for the demise of the discipline in adult education (specifically, psychology, sociology, philosophy and history) in research and teaching in adult education. Although evidence specifically reflects the British context, the analysis will seek to account for the shift in epistemology in terms of more global trends, including the impact of interdisciplinarity and multi-disciplinarity, of feminism on research and study in adult education, and the inter-related debate around postmodernity. The focus on feminism as a case study is the subject of a linked paper by Miriam Zukas (1997) in these proceedings.

Marking borders

At the time of the first SCUTREA conference in 1970, the view from North America in particular, was that adult education had established itself as a discipline. Indeed, as represented in the work of Knowles (1970) and the increasingly popular concept of andragogy, it had clearly marked out the boundaries of its field of study, if not yet its epistemology. This was reflected in the existence of university departments in adult education, researching the study of the education of adults, and the development of first and second degree awards in teaching and research in the education of adults. In Britain at the time, there were already a number of departments of adult education seeking to move the boundaries of their work beyond the provision of a university extra-mural programme for their local community, by developing postgraduate teaching and research in the theory and practice of adult education. However, there was deep concern for curriculum matters. Taking a retrospective look, Thomas (1984) provides an account of the role of the university adult education department and adult education lecturer at that time to establish the credibility of both its and their status, and their rightful place in the university and adult education as a university subject. Of course, Thomas was aware of the difficulties of marking the boundaries of adult education as a field of study and research, not least of which was the affinity that adult educators had with their subject disciplines. Many adult educators were (and to a significant extent continue to be) graduates, postgraduates, and then lecturers in archaeology, psychology, history or sociology, who just happened to be teaching adults through extra-mural work, rather than in the university mainstream. Up to the 1970s this appeared to be a desirable state of affairs, particularly from the lecturer's perspective, since they were working with mature and motivated students, largely free from the demands of assessment, and, apart from their organisational and administrative responsibilities, were left with a good deal of autonomy to pursue their own academic interests. For only a small minority did these interests lie in the study of the theory and practice of adult education. It was this small minority who got together towards the end of the 1960s to begin to network and develop an academic community for those whose interests did lie on establishing adult education as field of study. It is interesting to note that a significant number of those were coming from a fairly narrow range of subject specialisms: history, philosophy, psychology and sociology.

Although there is still dispute as to whether the inaugural conference held in Edinburgh in June 1970 was the actually the first SCUTREA conference, the first paper delivered at that conference was from a lecturer in philosophy, Paterson (1970), who wished maintain boundaries by discussing the philosophical aspects of adult education. In that paper he distinguished two approaches to the philosophy of adult education, a 'traditionalist' and a 'contemporary' view. From a traditionalist view, the justification of adult education having a 'pure' philosophy was difficult to sustain on rational and logical grounds, argued Paterson: '... there is not a discipline styled 'philosophy of adult education'. The academic study of adult education does give rise to philosophical questions ... the study of adult education does have philosophical aspects: in this sense there is such a discipline as 'philosophy of adult education', in which specialist students of adult education ought, in some measure, be versed' (1980, 11-12). However, Paterson goes on to argue that while the philosophy of adult education is an integral part of the study of adult education, it is not an integral part of philosophy. Adult education does not give rise to any new philosophical questions.

Lecturers in other disciplines staking their claim to be part of the adult education curriculum were more confident that they were contributing not only to the theory and practice of adult education, but to the development of their discipline. From the point of view of the historian, the history of adult education was just as valid as the historical study of any other phenomena (see *inter alia*, Percy 1971, Taylor 1971, Fieldhouse 1981). Psychology, on the other hand, as a discipline, would clearly benefit from the study of adult learning processes, and the impact of ageing, for example, on learning (see Toye 1972, tenHave 1973).

A content analysis of SCUTREA conference proceedings would by no means reveal a significant concern with the disciplinary or epistemological foundations of the study of adult education. Most papers throughout the 1970s were more concerned with researching policy issues than teaching practices or adult learning. Nevertheless, there is some evidence that this foundation was being taken for granted. For example, in a paper at the 1972 conference, Parsons provides a description of a new diploma course in the Leicester Adult Education Department, which placed as core 'general educational theory (history, sociology, psychology of education, etc.)' (Parsons 1972, 1). In 1974, Elizabeth Monkhouse provided an analysis of the psychology component of courses in adult education. This followed a session on 'The teaching of management in adult education', which raised many questions about the epistemological basis of the teaching and study of adult education, as they argued whether management was a 'non-subject'. In the discussion, 'it was recognised that different disciplines .. would have their own point of view. There is a case to be made for treating philosophy as the core organising principle, or psychology, or ... '. There is little doubt that the curricula of many of the providers of postgraduate training in adult education were organised along lines of subject specialism. This confirms my own experience, when appointed at Hull in 1978 to teach 'the sociology of adult education', alongside colleagues teaching psychology, history and philosophy of adult education. For me, the real value of attending SCUTREA conferences in the late 1970s and early 1980s was partly hidden from view, and mainly does not appear in the conference proceedings. Thomas (1984) refers to the interest groups as 'the most productive aspects' of SCUTREA, as they provide an opportunity for lecturers to meet colleagues who teach the same subjects. In 1979 I joined in the sociology interest group, and was aware that there was also a psychology and a history interest group, all of whom went on to generate published materials that promoted the intellectual content of the subjects. There were, however, also two or three interest groups which cut across the disciplinary bases: the comparative group with its focus on doing international research, and the women's group. The sociology interest group held its last meeting at the 1985 conference. This was a significant moment in pointing to the beginning of the end of disciplines in the study of the education of adults.

Along the borderline

Some of the factors that have contributed to the metamorphosis in SCUTREA since 1984[1] have been documented by Zukas (1994), in which she identified changes in the British extra-mural provision, changes in relations with other organisations, as well as the influence of the women's interest group, and the international collaboration and networking, particularly with North America. Only in passing does she note how 'researchers inevitably use the tools of their parent disciplines'. Now, looking at that period from around 1984 to 1989, it is possible to analyse what was going on in terms of the demise of those disciplines as a reliable and valid basis for teaching and researching adult education. The 1986 conference, for example, had a whole workshop devoted to discipline-based research. The organiser of the workshop, Geoffrey Squires, set the scene by stating that 'organised knowledge is typically categorised in terms of disciplines, often embodied in academic department. There are of course the basic epistemological questions to be asked about the nature of knowledge in general and academic disciplines in particular: for example whether the knowledge we have in some sense corresponds to the real work, or whether it is socially and historically relative: in shorthand terms, knowledge as structure or knowledge as construct. (Squires 1986, 84)

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[1] There is nothing particular about this date, except 1984 was the year Thomas chose to review the achievements of SCUTREA at the end of his three-year period of office as Honorary Chair of SCUTREA, and Zukas' 1994 review looked back over the previous decade. Indeed, I had already made a prophetic statement the year before: 'Our postgraduate knowledge of history, philosophy, sociology or whatever will cease to be as important as our teaching skills. Process rather than content will be in demand. Our abilities to teach, to communicate and to organise will be what external bodies come to buy, not our knowledge.' (Armstrong 1983)

This set of papers, and the workshop, usefully serve to remind us that adult education is, at most, a subset of education, which itself has a dubious epistemological foundation in contributory disciplines. Does that imply, asks Squires (1986, 85), that education is not a discipline but a field or focus of application? A further question posed asked about strengthening discipline-based research, establishing links with subject departments. With hindsight, the advent of the Research Assessment Exercise imposed on British universities in the 1990s, which is organised on a disciplinary basis, this might have been a sensible strategy. However, the epistemological concerns raised at that time, suggested otherwise. One of the papers presented in the 1986 conference was by Barry Bright (1986), building on concerns to maintain the boundaries with the relationship between psychology and adult education, later to developed into an edited collection (Bright 1989) which sought to clarify the epistemological concerns in a range of disciplines, both in Britain in North America. Bright (1989, 1-2) recounts how the idea for the book came whilst travelling from Texas to Syracuse, to present a paper on this relationship between his discipline (psychology) and adult education at the Adult Education Research Conference in May 1996. His story reminds us of the very different bases of teaching and practice in Britain and North America at that time (Brookfield 1989). At the 1988 Trans-Atlantic Dialogue conference, a number of the contributors to the edited book had an opportunity to present our papers (Armstrong 1988, Bright 1988, Griffin 1988, Paterson 1988 and Usher 1988). The title of Bright's paper and the language he uses ('damage', 'oversimplification', 'chaos', 'confusion', 'vandalism') reveals an overwhelming commitment to his discipline, psychology. It was a clear statement of how adult education in raiding or even borrowing knowledge from the established disciplines, specifically psychology, does damage to the discipline. He added that the same arguments that he presents for psychology apply to other disciplines. This vandalism, however, is not intentional, because, Bright argued, adult educators were not aware of the damage they were doing to the source disciplines. At the same conference, I myself contributed to this debate by focusing on sociology and its place on graduate adult education programmes. My argument was somewhat different in that for me the placement of sociology within professional development demythologised the nature of sociology as a potentially radical subject which would contribute to social change through the development of critical consciousness and reflectiveness.. Rather, it was sociology for technicism, sociology for relevance, sociology in use, that far from being subversive, served to support and reproduce the dominant ideology (Armstrong 1988, 1989).

Robin Usher's contribution to the debate (1987, 1988) suggested that whether adult education is a discipline may be an inappropriate question; constructivism has led to questions about the origins and nature of disciplines. In this sense, the debate has had little to do specifically with adult education seeking to locate itself in disciplinary terms, but was more about a wider drift to inter-disciplinarity and multi-disciplinarity. We were debating in a context where not only were the epistemological bases for drawing boundaries around disciplines being challenged, but the question whether to include or exclude adult education was 'up for grabs', and the nature of academic disciplines generally was being called into doubt.

Border crossing

Becher (1989) has helped us to clarify the 'problem', by reminding us that the boundaries of an academic discipline are never clear-cut:

> While it is convenient in some contexts to represent disciplines as clearly distinguishable stable entities, it has to be acknowledged that they are subject to both historical and geographical variation. (1989, 20-21)

Becher reviews the literature on the nature and definition of a discipline, and comes up with a set of criteria such as whether the organisation is structured around the 'discipline' (is there a department of adult education?), is there a free standing international community (SCUTREA and its sister research organisations and their conferences?), a professional association (SCUTREA itself?), a specialist journal (*Studies in the Education of Adults, International Journal of Lifelong Learning?*), and is it intellectually unchallenged? Another list might unpack this last criterion: academic credibility, intellectual substance and appropriateness of the subject matter. It is precisely in this domain that adult education's claims to be a discipline would flounder. In common with other inter-disciplinary fields of study and practice, it is difficult to justify criteria based on a mythologised or tautological notion of a discipline. Becher assists us to work through this identity crisis by introducing the metaphor of tribalism into the discussion. He sees disciplines as having 'recognisable identities and particular cultural attributes', which are not dissimilar from those that distinguish tribes. This idea has been developed at an earlier SCUTREA conference by Edwards and Usher (1994).

The work of Usher and Edwards, (1994, ch. 4) sets the study of adult education in its university and cultural context, and would appear to reflect no more or less than the undercurrents of wider cultural studies, widely characterised as the postmodern condition, in which 'discipline' can be interpreted in the ambiguous Foucauldian sense of transforming pre-modern forms of coercion and to identify a body of knowledge with a system of social control. As Marshall (1989) puts it, for Foucault a body of knowledge is a system of social control to the extent that discipline as knowledge makes possible discipline as control:

> In other words, disciplines as systematic bodies of knowledge are also regulatory regimes of 'knowledgeable' practice through which power is exercised. In order to be regulated, the person first has to be constituted as an active 'subject' and this takes place through a process of observation and surveillance, the criteria and methods of which are provided by the disciplinary knowledge of 'human' sciences. Discipline in both a power and a knowledge sense, is manifest in the workings of the institutions of modern social formations. They are co-implicated with one another so that, as knowledge changes, so do the practices aimed at framing behaviour. (Usher and Edwards 1994, 93).

In his most recent work, Usher (with Bryant and Johnston 1997), begins by saying that this debate on adult education as a discipline is so well-rehearsed that to go through it again (as I have here) is pointless unless there is something new to add. The notion of disciplinary knowledge in the education of adults continues to be problematic, but that does not necessarily mean the end of discipline. Rather, there needs to be a 'reconsideration of the role and a re-configuring of their place in the contemporary postmodern scene' (1997, 68). In a context where adult education takes on a diversity and multiplicity of forms, there is a need to continues to 'theorise' (but without privileging theory over practice), and to continue to challenge the power of disciplinarians to contain 'truth' or 'reality'. Certainly, we can see that disciplinary discourses still permeate the field[2]. What is different, however, is that the awareness and understanding of skirmishes along the borderlines provides a way into the challenge. Take psychology, for example, which Bright was concerned was being damaged by adult educators acting as border raiders, who managed to evade the boundary riders, is no longer seen as a knowledge discourse, nor simply practice to which one attaches theory. As an outsider to psychology, but with an awareness of the domain of social psychology, and its various forms, I find the crossing of the borders of the discipline, by the incorporation of theoretical and practical influences from, say, phenomenology, feminist and cultural discourses which have led to a critical re-thinking of psychology, encouraging (Smith, Harré and Langenhove 1995). At least, the authors have not joined the long list of 'endisms' and announced the end of psychology, but nor will the borders protecting the discourse of truth and reality be ever quite the same again.

In *Border Crossings*, Giroux argues that teachers, in both schooling and in the post-compulsory sector, have become cultural workers engaged in either boundary maintenance, or — more radically — in border raids, to loot and steal from other disciplines and other practices (eclecticism). The blurring of the borders between disciplines, the growth of inter-disciplinary programmes of study, the transfer of learning and skills — in short, both pluralism and eclecticism — have, it has been suggested, whilst not spelling the end of discipline quite yet, have become dominant characteristics of much of higher education, and not just in the education of adults.

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[2] The continuing framing of knowledge in the Research Assessment Exercise in Britain along disciplinary lines is evidence of such power, since this determines what is valued as research, using criteria that are protected from challenge by power of those to control what counts as knowledge.

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Vocational education and training partnerships in remote Aboriginal communities

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Generally, the current education and training systems have failed to deliver an appropriate model of education for Indigenous Australians at all levels. This is a matter of public record and requires little elaboration. The statistical profiles of Aboriginal participation in education across all sectors collected for *The National Review for Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Yunupingu 1994) demonstrate that while there have been some small improvements and individual endeavour has been outstanding in some instances, these are exceptions and Aboriginal participation in education is still significantly lower than for non-indigenous Australians. The delivery of Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses follows this same pattern as the other sectors. In particular, Aboriginal people living in rural and remote communities of Australia remain significantly under-represented as participants in VET.

in this setting the paper describes the history, development, operation and outcomes of the research, Explo*ring Partnerships and Prac edutices in the Delivery of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses in Rural and Remote Aboriginal Communities.* The study is based on a collaborative project (Batchelor College, the Northern Territory University, the Aboriginal Development Unit and the Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority [NTETA]) funded by the Australian National Training Authority Research Advisory Council and NTETA. The research project explores partnerships in VET course delivery at six sites in the Northern Territory (NT) of Australia. The Northern Territory has a small population base (of some 180,000 people of which 25% are Aboriginal) but covers an area of some 1.3 million square kilometres (or one sixth of the Australian land-mass). This study, while focusing on the Northern Territory, has ramifications for VET delivery to Aboriginal communities across Australia.

Historical context

In historical terms the provision of any sort of government funded vocational education and training to Aboriginal communities in the Northern Territory is a recent event. Before 1972, there were few mechanisms on the settlements to enable Aboriginal residents to have any say in how the settlements might be managed. The 1970s mark a turning point. Federally, policies were now framed by the concepts of Aboriginal self-determination and self-management, and the settlements were promoted as self-governing communities. These transitions, however, could not take place overnight. While administrative and policy changes represented a great leap forward on the one hand, on the other, it could be argued, assimilationist and colonial perspectives continued to privilege Western knowledge about work, education and training over Aboriginal knowledge.

In 1975 a Senior Education Adviser Aboriginal Adult Education was appointed within the Special Projects Branch of the Northern Territory Division of the Commonwealth Department of Education. At this time, in theory at least, control of Aboriginal communities was being handed back to the Aboriginal people through incorporation, so that there was a general perception that education and training programmes were needed to ensure proper management of the new responsibilities of community control. Adult educators were allocated roles which would facilitate these processes. While responsible to the senior education adviser adult educators were nevertheless employed in non-formal adult education that had an implicit 'community development' aspect. Within their mandate was a fair degree of flexibility to respond to community needs (Haynes 1981).

In 1979 control of education was transferred from the Commonwealth to the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly following the Northern Territory Self-Government Act of 1978. As part of this transfer a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Branch was established which assumed the responsibilities for the Aboriginal Adult Education and Training Branch (AEATB). This was a period of growth in terms of the number of adult educator positions (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) on Aboriginal communities whose number expanded to 44. The emphasis during the period 1979-1986 was towards on-site, usually on-job training and education. There remained an element of community development in the role of the adult educators who were expected to provide an on-site educational support for Aboriginal communities.

This approach was taken forward into the Northern Territory Open College (NTOC) concept that developed during 1986/87. NTOC incorporated both the AEATB and regional centres' operations (TAFE centres established in various small urban localities). While the Open College carried over a perspective of Aboriginal adult education that incorporated an holistic and community based approach, the pressures from the Federal government in its overhaul of tertiary education led inexorably to a more centralist and instrumental view of education and training. By the early 1990s community based adult educators were finding it more and more difficult to meet the needs of the statistical, management directed and instrumental approach. Non-formal courses gave away to accredited VET courses only, and the community development nature of previous delivery waned. Under these circumstances the College found difficulty in maintaining staff (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and positions. It was in this context that NTOC was decommissioned, and in May 1993, the Northern Territory Minister for Education initiated the Open Learning Network monitored by NTETA.

In 1995 the Training Network Northern Territory (TNNT), a branch of NTETA, was conceived to replace the Open Learning Network. The TNNT was established to operate in a number of training roles. Its main roles were in assessing training needs, identifying appropriate training providers and in facilitating training delivery through providing infrastructure (facilities where available) and funding grants. As a 'broker' TNNT cannot deliver training in its own right.

This situation, by compartmentalising the way in which Aboriginal need is ascertained from the delivery of programmes on the one hand and the infrastructure (facility) support on the other, has inevitably led to a variety of concerns. Concepts of community development have declined, while competition and accredited programmes imported from elsewhere in Australia (often with little local input/content) have increased. Issues such as local control and the need for a breadth of educational opportunities are apparent in the present education context in remote communities. This study, by investigating programmes which appear to offer effective partnerships in training, attempts to suggest how, in the present environment, courses may remain effective and in the control of Aboriginal people in remote communities.

The project

As stated above, the current systems have failed to deliver an appropriate model of education for Indigenous Australians at all levels. In delivering VET courses to Aboriginal communities both providers and clients have struggled with the complexities of community life and have found it difficult to adjust the institutional framing of formal training requirements to the realities of community cultures. Generally, the delivery of VET to remote and rural Aboriginal communities has presented VET system providers and Aboriginal people alike with sometimes questionable outcomes, particularly when vocational competencies are linked to the development of the communities concerned. Too often Aboriginal peoples' priorities are ignored. In the *National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* recommendations concerning the delivery of VET focused on: Aboriginal involvement in the initiation and development of programmes, Aboriginal participation and modes of delivery; access to appropriate programmes for Aboriginal participants, effective linkages to Aboriginal community development priorities and aspirations, and achievable and appropriate educational outcomes. The *Yunupingu Report* (1984) called for collaborative research into VET course development and delivery involving Aboriginal people.

It was in response to this profile of Aboriginal participation in VET courses in remote communities, and the recommendations for further research that this research project was conceived. Rather than consider why participation rates are low, however, the research project on which this paper is based set out to study six communities which were perceived to offer examples of 'good practice' in the operation of training courses (a variety of providers, course types and subjects were involved). The research objectives included investigating: culturally appropriate VET delivery, partnerships between providers and Aboriginal client enterprises, and customisation of training responses appropriate to Aboriginal client training needs in remote and rural Aboriginal communities.

The case study method

It was considered that a case study method using ethnographic approaches was the most appropriate methodology to reveal the characteristics of partnerships and issues about the delivery of courses in remote Aboriginal contexts. The steering committee wanted to move beyond an evaluative model which focused on outcomes and to understand instead the processes which constituted the partnerships. Ethnography, which may be defined as a way of establishing a picture of the way of life of some group or culture by systematically learning reality from the point of view of the people being studied, was perceived to be an appropriate approach. It was felt that using ethnographic techniques would contribute to the ability of the case study to research the interaction of the participants in their work situations. It was important within the approach used that the researcher worked closely with the study participants to create valid knowledge. Or, as Owens (1982, 5) confirms, there can be no understanding of human behaviour:

> ... without understanding the framework within

> which the individuals under study interpret their environment, and that this, in turn, can best be understood through understanding their thoughts, feelings, values, perceptions, and their actions.

The steering committee also felt that there was, by and large, little understanding amongst policy makers and the general public of the complexities of operating education and training courses in communities where factors such as culture, isolation and climate must be taken into account. They therefore believed that the course being studied could not be researched or described in isolation. The contextual factors and the elements of Aboriginal culture and the notion of community needed to be captured by the research methodology. The case study format using ethnographic approaches proved suitable to the task.

The research structure

It was decided at an early stage to combine what was initially the project executive with the steering committee and to make the steering committee the driving body. It was also decided that a collaborative and team approach was the most ethical and suitable on which to design the research structure.

While the objectives for the research had been identified in the initial funding submission and the case study had been identified as the methodology, the steering committee developed the research framework in such a manner that the case study researchers would operate wherever possible as teams (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) and that these teams would be connected to the steering group through a series of workshops based loosely on action research principles. It was felt that in this way the researchers would have the benefit of the experiences of the steering committee (who could also act as peer reviewers) and in return the steering committee members would be further informed and integrated into the research through dialogue with the researchers. This approach proved to be very successful and promoted a sense of alternating roles between learner and teacher.

In most instances the case study researchers were chosen because they were known to the communities in which the identified case study programme was operating. It was felt that it was advantageous to the study for the researchers to be knowledgeable about the programme concerned and be familiar with the community in which it was operating (and, very importantly, that the community perceived the researchers to be appropriate persons). It was acknowledged that already established relationships between researchers and communities is both culturally and methodologically appropriate. Methodologically in the sense that prior knowledge and relationships allowed researchers to delve more deeply into the 'layers' of knowledge available to them in the given time frame.

A series of three workshops were devised and carried out during the research period. In the initial workshop the steering committee members were conscious of their commitment to partnership, although in this workshop they believed that they would provide much of the direction. It was important that the case study researchers shared a research framework and had a common understanding of particular terms and foci. During the two day workshop a research framework was established which provided a checklist of elements emanating from the objectives of the study. The checklist was intended to be a supportive document, not a constraining one. It was recognised that each of the case studies would be undertaken as a discrete research activity, however, this was not seen to preclude making generalisations based on the sum of the case studies. As Erickson (1986, 130) states:

> The search is not for *abstract universals* arrived at by statistical generalisations from a sample to a population, but for *concrete universals* arrived at by studying a specific case in great detail and then comparing it with other cases studied in equally great detail.

A second workshop was conducted after the case studies had begun. As the researchers reported on their progress a number of common themes emerged. For example, it was evident from the case studies that the factors affecting the capacity of institutions to enter into partnerships based on equity varied significantly at different times and at different sites. This, and other themes emerging from the study were discussed and analysed by the group. The workshop provided a forum for researchers to check their process, undergo peer review and to check what further knowledge might be required before moving back into the field.

The participative and action based approach to the research continued at the third and final two day residential workshop. At this forum, the steering group and the research team members were again present. Informants, stakeholders and partners from the case study sites were also invited to participate. The case study researchers had submitted draft versions of their reports which were circulated to all the participants beforehand. The focus of the two days was to interrogate the case studies as to how specific research objectives had been met, to assist the development of the case studies through a process of peer review, and to capture emerging themes. For the researchers who were working towards finalising their reports it was also appropriate to create an opportunity to both analyse and validate their findings. At this meeting attention was also focused on the emerging themes and ways in which these might be addressed in the final report.

Again information was checked with those participants who were present. Researchers were then to take the completed draft case studies back to the communities for change and approval.

Outcomes of the research

Based on the six case studies, there is little doubt that Aboriginal people want education and training courses conducted on-site and, where possible, on-the-job. There is also a reasonable case to suggest that courses presented in this manner are more likely to be effective, particularly in terms of completion rates, status for the individual (and the course) and thus increased competence of the students. A number of other themes also emerged from the research. Perhaps of little surprise was the complexity of factors that make up the contexts in which the case studies 'stood'. There was a fluidity in these contexts as emerging interests in the communities concerned changed the parameters of courses. It was clearly evident from the case studies that VET courses were better received when they were encapsulated in a community's life and development. It was also clear that there were tensions between traditional Aboriginal knowledge and Western knowledge. Students learn in situations where overlapping and sometimes conflicting domains of knowledge are situated. Some of these domains included: learning as represented by the VET institution, the workplace, work place learning and Aboriginal knowledge and culture.

A key theme which emerged from the case studies, and which effectively underpinned the establishment and operation of these courses in remote Aboriginal communities, can be summarised by the term relationships. The development of relationships at a range of levels is vital to any training partnership in these communities. There are the relationships premised on kinship arrangements which exist within communities and which form a cultural backdrop to the development of other relationships important to course development. There are also relationship developments between community course organisers and their community, between community organisers and funding bodies, and community organisers and providers.

One particular set of relationships that the case studies suggested impacted on the effective running of courses was that between the community and organisations in the training 'partnership'. These organisations take the form of providers (colleges, university and other training/education agencies) and funding organisations. While it may be expected that such organisations will play an important role in course development partnerships with Aboriginal communities, it is apparent that this role is often perceived to be obstructive, bewildering and disempowering. The barriers to effective partnerships, and thus effective operation of courses, included inflexible rules, regulations designed for 'mainstream' course operation, tardiness, obstructive personnel and a lack of willingness and resources on the part of providing agencies to support programmes at a distance from the host institution.

It is understandable that organisations will inevitably function around core business. Dealing with the development and operation of courses in remote communities does not necessarily relate to core business. In many instances those people developing the courses made it through the bureaucratic 'maze' only with the assistance of individuals or groups of individuals with particular expertise and experience who support the course through an organisation's policy, structures and processes. It remains a concern that the organisations established to facilitate education and training in Aboriginal communities, albeit constrained at times by policy, create barriers and frustrations for the smooth development and delivery of courses.

Another key theme from the case studies was that surrounding the notion of curriculum and curriculum development. Evidence from the case studies suggested that the more 'invisible' the course the more successful and sustainable was the programme. The concept of 'curricularisation' was put forward to indicate the separation and transformation that occurs between learning in context and the course. When knowledge is curricularised (made into a course) it is transformed - it is not the same knowledge. The orthodoxy suggests that only after knowledge is curricularised can abstraction, or second order learning take place. Instead, what seems clear from the study is that best practice learning is taking place in programmes where work and the course are integrated and that abstraction is part of these programmes. Second order learning is integral, but takes place not in a course removed from the workplace, but in the workplace. When training then takes place at the work site, that site is integrated into community life already and training has an immediate relevance. Aboriginal participants are then much more likely to colonise the courses in appropriate ways.

A number of other issues surrounding curriculum were also identified. The VET sector continues to follow a competency-based curriculum approach. Such a directive, centralist and behaviourally oriented approach, sits uneasily in circumstances where the issues include negotiating different traditions of knowledge, demonstrating respect for differing cultural positions, and building in flexibility. If flexibility was defined exclusively in terms of the VET definition it would limit the capacity of partners to trade off power and status. Flexibility also implies dynamism, and on-going negotiation between partners, which are important elements in the development of courses on remote

Aboriginal communities.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to put into context the circumstances of the research project, *Exploring Partnerships and Practices in the Delivery of Vocational Education and Training (VET) Courses in Rural and Remote Aboriginal Communities.* This included providing an historical perspective on education and training in Aboriginal communities and establishing a perspective on the way in which the research was approached by the research team.

The research as portrayed through the case studies paint a vivid picture of the development of education and training courses in remote Aboriginal communities. As a number of the themes that emerged from the research testified, course development in remote Aboriginal communities is often a problematic business in which a number of barriers have to be overcome before appropriate partnerships and effective courses can be implemented. There are also, however, lessons that can be learnt from the study. Such lessons include the need to reconceptualise notions of course and curricula. It is apparent from the study that curriculum and curriculum knowledge must be negotiated and must include Aboriginal knowledge. It is also important that training and education courses adapt to the rhythms of the community in which the course is taking place. These may be hard lessons to learn for a national VET system focused on Australia's industrial needs.

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'Your so-called democracy is hypocritical because you can always fail us': learning and living democratic contradictions in graduate adult education

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Of all the ideas frequently espoused as representing an authentic adult educational tradition, democracy comes closest to constituting a grand narrative. The word is used to justify whatever practice adult educators subscribe to, and it serves as a kind of scriptural signalling. We invoke the word to signify our progressive, leftist credentials. Uttering the word 'democracy' represents a sort of ideological masonic handshake. Those who profess to be working democratically, ourselves included, often betray a self-congratulatory smugness.

As with other grand narratives, the idea of democracy is malleable and slippery, with as many particular meanings as utterers. It can also be invoked so frequently and ritualistically that it becomes evacuated of any significant meaning. In this way 'democracy' serves as a premature ultimate — a term that carries such reverence that, once invoked, precludes any further serious discussion of its meaning. If we reply to a question about our practice by saying we did something because it was democratic, the conversation often comes to a full stop. The word is so uncritically revered in adult education that it has become reified, immune to close, critical scrutiny. Only by trying to live out the democratic process do the contradictions of this idea become manifest.

We began this process assuming that democracy was desirable. Our intention was to point out the difficulties we encountered in our attempt to practise it. In the process of writing, however, Ian's position changed. He now questions not only the feasibility of democracy, but also its desirability. Ian is therefore engaging in this critique as an outsider, and Stephen as an insider. For this reason, we have chosen to keep our comments separate.

In the remainder of this essay we scrutinise democracy by critically examining our practice as adult educators in general, and as faculty within the Adult and Continuing Education (ACE) Doctoral Programme of National-Louis University (NLQ, in particular. We do so by commenting separately on three questions: (1) What is democracy? (2) What are democracy's inherent contradictions? and (3) How are we living out those contradictions?

What is democracy?

Stephen: I think of democracy as a process, more specifically a conversation in which all are heard, all voices carry equal weight, all are open to critique and self-criticism, and all have the same opportunity to participate in creating experiences and taking decisions that affect them. In my earlier, more naive days, I thought of democracy as an indivisible concept. A process either was, or wasn't, democratic. The rough rule I used to judge its existence was the existence of majority decision-making power. Over time, however, I've learned the truth of one of Lindeman's democratic disciplines, the partial functioning of ideals. Nowadays I think of democracy as contextually variable, so that situations can be judged as being more or less democratic. There can be a greater, or lesser, amount of open, authentic, participatory conversation about matters that concern those in speech. In this sense I move increasingly to equating democratic process in higher education with the pursuit of the ideal speech situation.

Ian: Democracy is the equalisation of liberties. Democrats advocate *equal*, rather than *maximal*, liberties because they believe that absolute freedom[1] is neither possible nor ethical. Every person is entitled to as much freedom as the next. So, except for social interactions in which opportunities are limitless (reminiscent of the Hobbesian/Lockean hypothetical State of Nature) absolute freedom cannot be morally justified (Hobbes 1651; Locke 1947). The freedoms of interacting beings must be reciprocally regulated if their interactions are to be judged as being just. Ethical freedom is relative freedom. Our freedom to swing our arms ends where another person's nose begins (Lipson 1985, 153). What implications does the foregoing have for democratic functioning? Equality has two meanings — *uniformity* and *proportionality*. The former obtains when people are treated identically; the latter, when people are treated discriminately, but appropriately so. The question for democracy is therefore: 'which is to be under what circumstances' (Lipson 1985, 152)? Making such determination, I contend, is one of the more insurmountable hurdles of democracy.

What are democracy's inherent contradictions?

Ian: I will examine three inherent democratic contradictions: (1) the intractable people, (2) problems associated with voting and majority rule, and (3) being democratic versus being ethical.

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[1] *Liberty* and *freedom* are used interchangeably in this paper. Also *equality* and *equity* are used synonymously throughout this paper.

(1) The intractable people: 'The people' are the arbiters of virtues in a democracy. Except in very limited contexts, determining who constitutes 'the people' is next to impossible. Everyone who is potentially affected by a decision of the polity has a *bona fide* claim to membership. The early Greeks left out women and slaves. Likewise, we tend to exclude persons out of ignorance, selfishness, greed, prudence, and so on. Whatever our reasons, any omission of any interested party constitutes a violation of equal liberties, and therefore a blow to democracy.

Mere inclusion does not ensure equal liberties. Those included must also enjoy equal or proportionate influence. For what's the point of having all participate if a few will dominate? In cases where equity demands uniformity, this means giving every opinion the same chance of selection. In cases where equity demands proportionality we must establish appropriate discriminating criteria. Arriving at such decisions without contravening the equal liberties principle seems impossible except in very limited contexts. In most situations, a privileged group assumes the mantle of 'the people' — a *de facto* aristocracy parading as a *de jure* democracy. I find this rather unethical and hypocritical.

(2) *The vagaries of voting and majority rule:* Suppose we got all of 'the people' to participate adequately. In all likelihood, they will not always agree. The most common 'democratic' means of dealing with disagreements is majority rule. Majority rule poses a serious threat to equal liberties if it is not accomplished through a random selection process (such as casting lots)[2].

Voting is now the preferred means of 'democratic' decision-making. But voting is not a random selection process. And for that reason, it was avoided by early Grecian democrats. They believed that people voted to secure their self-interests, interests formulated, not randomly, but on the basis of their socialisation (their experiences related to education, race/ethnicity, gender, class, religion, nationality, and so on). As we know, people with similar backgrounds usually develop similar interests, leading to similar allegiances. This is why voting, coupled with majority rule, often degenerate into tyranny of the majority (Harrison 1993, ch. 2).

(3) Being democratic verses being ethical: Acting democratically is not necessarily acting ethically or wisely. In democratic transactions, we subject our ideas (self-interests) to public debate. During such debates some ideas are discarded, others are modified, and new ones sometimes emerge. When debate ceases we select from among surviving ideas. At the moment of decision, democracy demands that each of us trade our self-interests for a 'common good'. This 'common good' is assumed to result from majority ruling (either through voting or random selection).

However, majority ruling need not result in a 'common good', or the best decision. We often find ourselves radically opposed to decisions made by a ruling majority. When such situations arise civil disobedience is our only ethical recourse. Democracy does not necessarily prevent civil disobedience, but it de-legitimises it. For, to actively oppose the rule of 'the people' (however defined) is, *ipso facto*, anti-democratic. The matter comes down to this: in such cases, how will I act, democratically or ethically?

Stephen: First, that the strongest meaning of democracy is that associated with the decision-making power of the majority. In my own practice there are times when my own commitment to critical reflection comes up squarely against my commitment to democratic process, as when students say they don't wish to think critically about practices or ideas, they just want to summarise what they see and read. I cannot give up my commitment to critical reflection, though I can negotiate with students how this might be lived out. Second, I struggle with elements of my earlier understanding of democracy as indivisible, either it exists or it doesn't. I become frustrated with the need for extended conversation, and yearn for a simple majority vote. The ambiguity of open-endedness sometimes becomes overwhelming.

Third, it seems to me that participants in a democratic process need a common purpose; they must share a similar commitment. At times the only common purpose that doctoral students seem to share is that of finishing the programme. This doesn't sit easily with my sense that democratic process exists in pursuit of progressive social change. Fourth, the time needed for democratic, inclusive conversation is so lengthy that it constantly abuts institutional deadlines and calendars. Faculty and students need to show that courses have been finished, grades awarded, doctoral projects completed, curriculum covered, and so on. The democracy we live often isn't so much participatory as reactive. Because of the lack of time for conversations about the curriculum, what gets studied, and for how long, tends to grow out of students' reactions to faculty's proposals. We still haven't worked out how to involve students as co-creators of curriculum from the outset. And some students protest vigorously that this isn't their responsibility, while others, equally vigorously, maintain that without this we have a sham democracy.

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[2] Randomly attained decisions pose other problems. Knowledge (it would seem) is important to wise decision making. If so, the 'good' might be enhanced if the knowledgeable was privileged. But what constitutes knowledge, and how could such decisions be made in democratically consistent ways?

that this isn't their responsibility, while others, equally vigorously, maintain that without this we have a sham democracy.

Fifth, despite our best attempts to mediate against this, inequities of race, class, gender, status, personality and positional power that are imported from the wider society inevitably distort how the conversation develops. Certain people tend to speak regularly more than others.

Sixth, conversations in which the faculty's voices are present are problematic. Our voices accrue more power since we are the arbiters of students' grades. Also, students perceive disparities of power between and among the faculty — some faculty's voices are perceived as superior to others.

There are also cultural and class differences in the ways in which different faculty give critique to each other, and to students. Students differ widely in their interpretations of what it means for faculty to behave respectfully towards them. Does respectful critique mean speaking gently and quietly, never interrupting another's comments and modulating one's tone evenly and calmly? Or is this a white, middle class definition of respect? If faculty confront students with a strong, loud statement of how students are wrong, is this, by implication, a disrespectful act?

How are we living out our democratic contradictions?

Ian: *How are faculty and students dealing with the intractable people?* Who are the arbiters of virtues in our programme? Who ultimately legitimises our policies and operations? On the surface we might be tempted to say 'the core faculty'. It's true that the core faculty make final decisions on our day-to-day operations. However, upon further consideration, I have concluded that 'the people' are the accreditation agency — North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCACS). Why? Because, ultimately, the association must ratify what the faculty plan and implement. The association has the power to decertify (that is to say de-legitimise) our programme. And without such certification we would cease to exist, in our current form and status. It seems rather hypocritical that we would refer to what we do as 'democratic', when our arbiters (NCACS officials) are a group of undemocratically-elected élites.

How are we addressing the vagaries of voting and majority rule? In our programme, we don't have to contend with democratic dilemmas associated with voting and majority rule (see discussion above). Our day-to-day operations are not run by majority rule. The core faculty make those decisions. We encourage students' inputs through mechanisms such as a *cohort council* and participatory discourse. But students' inputs are essentially advisory — they do not have executive force. Students could rebel. But the fact that they might have to speaks to their limited executive powers.

Even if faculty found a way to share executive powers with students, that does not mean that we are now democratic. In order to be democratic, other interested parties (the rest of the field, and potentially affected members of society) should also enjoy an equal or proportionate say in our operations. The faculty and students do not even represent the field, far less the rest of society. As faculty, we unashamedly situate our selves within the more liberal, critical humanist traditions of the field — closely aligned with activists such as Lindeman, Miles Horton and Paulo Freire. Persons espousing the view of education as apolitical, neutral, and merely technical will find themselves and their views alienated (and possibly attacked, even though tacitly so) by what we value, say, and do in the programme. This has indeed occurred. One student, sympathetic to corporate capitalism, has repeatedly indicated to me that he finds himself and his views marginalised in the programme. It is hypocritical for us to define who we are, and what we do, by consciously excluding certain interested parties, and yet claim to be democratic.

How are we dealing with our ethical dilemmas? When faced with the dilemma: how should I act, democratically or ethically?, I have always erred on the side of being ethical. When I act, I do so either out of coercion, or because my wisdom (knowledge and virtues) compels me. It is downright hypocritical (and, I might add, contradictory) of me to say that I act (voluntarily) because the 'the people' made me do it. Sometimes my wisdom dictates that I support the decisions of 'the people', sometimes it compels me to disobey. At all times, I prefer to act wisely (that is, ethically) rather than democratically. I might add that I've noticed that this is also true of everyone with whom I have ever interacted.

An illustration might be helpful here. A few students have charged me with being disrespectful and unsupportive because of the manner in which I engage in critique. I interrupt sometimes, I am very direct, and, quite often, I keep the spotlight on individual students, requiring that they demonstrate the validity of their claims. I have assessed that there is some credence to their charge. Consequently, I have apologised for specific actions, and I've made efforts to interrupt less, and be less direct. However, I have assessed some of their claims to be culturally biased. Specifically, I believe that some of their notions of what constitutes respect comes from a middle to upper class, anglo-American tradition — alien to mine. Some of these students have attempted to 'rehabilitate' me by proposing a 'code of discourse' to guide our class discussions. I have flatly objected to it even though it might have received majority support. In this situation, I opted to be ethical rather than democratic. When such situations arise, my political philosophy must not only allow for civil disobedience (for that's exactly what I did), it must also legitimise it. I am ruled, in the final analysis, by my wisdom, not by any so called 'people'. We might even call this political philosophy *Sophiocracy* — the rule of wisdom!

Are we serving a democratic (societal) function? Marx has correctly noted that any social formation which fails to reproduce itself will not last one year (Althusser 1971, 127, cf Marx 1967). To do so, societies produce, re-produce, rank, allocate, and legitimate values consistent with their survival. Such values include knowledge, skills, and jobs. Mass schooling has evolved as one of the most important agencies of societal reproduction and legitimation. Althusser is making this point when he argues that schools are the most important ideological state apparatus of the modern world, replacing the church (1971, 137ff).

The United States is a classed-based society. Its values are not only unequally distributed, but this inequality is taken for granted — legitimated. Schools play a crucial role in this legitimation. To do otherwise is to risk extinction. Mass schooling has performed its reproductive and legitimation functions by becoming an elaborate sorting machine of which graduate higher education occupies the apex (Apple 1982, 1985; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Collins 1979; Giroux 1983; Karabel and Halsey 1977). Graduate adult education is an integral part of graduate higher education in the United States. Like all other graduate higher education programmes, graduate adult education produces knowledge and skills, ranks them, and differentially distributes them to members of society.

The foregoing is not an inherent argument. It is still possible to find mavericks — programmes, on the margins, which undermine the very fabric of the societies to which they belong. I know of no graduate adult education programme that is undermining the class-based nature of US society. And those that dare to buck the system will certainly make a lot of martyrs in the process. I am not aware of anyone in the United States who has been martyred for his or her involvement in graduate adult education programmes. This is certainly not the case in our programme at NLU. Moreover, from a macro socio-political perspective, our programme is no different from any other. Like all other graduate adult education programmes in the US, our most important products are masters and doctoral degrees. These are very expensive. Few could afford them. And those who could seldom acquire their fortunes meritocratically, let alone democratically. The net effect, therefore, of graduate adult education (including ours) is to widen the distributions of what counts as valuable knowledge and skills in our society. This is hardly a goal of democracy.

Probably the greatest barrier to our fostering democracy is the competitive nature of our programme. As a graduate programme within higher education in the US, we compete with other similar programmes for limited students and resources. Our relative success, therefore, depends on the relative failure of our competitors. In democratic jargon, our success requires that we maximise our liberties by minimising the liberties of our competitors — the antithesis of democracy, if I ever heard one.

Stephen: One way to ease our sense of wallowing in an ethical quagmire is for us to clarify repeatedly our understanding of democracy, the university-imposed parameters within which we have to work, and the democratic expectations we have of ourselves, and others. In our publicity materials we failed to announce clearly and unequivocally the centrality of democratic process to our process. We tried to redress this during the admissions workshop by altering the workshop in midstream as a result of student concerns. We have also tried to model our own commitment to democratic process by team teaching all our courses, by organising teaching around themes and issues that cross curricular boundaries, and by making all our decisions as a group only after long, long conversation (our doctoral faculty meetings typically last seven to eight hours). In front of the students we disagree with each other but show how much we have learned from our mutual critique.

We have also tried to equalise the perceived disparity among student voices, and the faculty's own power, by introducing regular anonymous student feedback. Students complete anonymous evaluative commentaries on each weekend and these are then compiled and reported out to the whole doctoral community. Issues and criticisms raised on these commentaries find themselves becoming agenda items for the cohort council.

We also try to celebrate the loose ambiguity of democratic process, to live it ludically. We point out to students how the faculty find it hard to come to consensus, but how much fun we have arguing against each other's positions. We are also making a concerted effort to build in more time before a semester starts for students to be involved as co-creators of the curriculum. To this end the listserv we established early on allows a great deal of informed conversation before anyone shows up for class.

Conclusion

We seem to agree on the basic tenets of democracy. Both of us believe that it means critical discourse, involving effectual participation of all interested parties in decisions at all levels. And both of us appreciate how difficulty it is to attain such participation within higher education in the United

States. We are also in agreement as to the nature and level of participation among students and faculty in the ACE doctoral programme of NLU. Our major disagreements revolve around how we label such participation, and our views concerning the desirability of democracy *per se*. Stephen, taking a more micro socio-political perspective, interprets our practice as democratic. Focusing on specific actions of faculty and students within the programme, he concludes that democracy is a partially functioning ideal, to which we are progressively striving. Ian, taking a more macro socio-political perspective, interprets our practice as non-democratic, if not antidemocratic. He argues that as an integral organ of a class-based society, graduate adult education must (of necessity) legitimise social inequalities — a wholly anti-democratic function. Furthermore, he thinks that there are times when acting democratically is both unwise and unethical. And, in the final analysis, he prefers to be right than to be democratic.

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Participation in adult education: breaking boundaries or deepening inequalities?

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There are many ways of investigating the concept of boundaries and borders in the education of adults. This paper will examine one boundary — that which divides participation in formal provision from non-participation — concentrating on the important but under-researched issue of the relationship between education and social activity.

The rhetoric of many adult education providers is located in the notion of social justice through targeted provision for the disadvantaged in society whether that disadvantage lies in race, class, gender, geography or any other grouping. In post-modern terms, much adult education is targeted at the 'other' in society. However, this is counterbalanced by the focus of current political and educational ideologies on individual development and achievement (in particular in the formal sense of individually certificated achievement) rather than the notion of education for social and collective purposes. This has lead to the provision of a certain type of education which benefits some at the expense of others. In Britain at least, financial imperatives resulting from hegemonic influences are more powerful than any collectivist paradigms.

One of the most interesting factors to emerge from a national survey of one group of adult educators was the effect of ideological shifts on attitudes of programme organisers (Benn and Burton 1995). When asked whether the prime purpose of adult education is to change the position of certain groups in society or give individuals increased opportunity, almost three-quarters opted for the latter. This emphasis on individualism rather than social purpose is reinforced by the overwhelming agreement that selection was primarily on the basis of enthusiasm and motivation, of necessity characteristics of an individual not a group. These factors militate against a sustained targeting policy. This is not to argue that adult education does not reach many of its targeted groups. Nor that in raising questions about the beliefs of practitioners, we are questioning the sincerity of the beliefs or the commitment of individuals. It does however raise the serious question of the validity of the rhetoric of targeting in a time when politically the ideology of individualism holds sway and educationally the pedagogy (or andragogy) of adult education is based on the humanist notions of individual development together with behaviourist ideas of individual advancement for utilitarian purposes. The result is an education system that exacerbates inequality of opportunities.

This paper develops the notion of education as a divisive agent by arguing that participation results not from targeting by providers but through a process of self-selection. If learning is seen as a function of social relationships rather than an essentially individual activity, then the concept of lifelong learning is extended beyond solely the acquisition by individuals of formal qualifications. Learning then ties in with a set of other relationships within organisations, families, communities and the economic sector. This raises the interesting question whether one of the characteristics of individuals who participate in formal adult education is social activism i.e. are people who participate in adult education already active members of society, and hence already empowered, or at least, more empowered, stakeholders in society? This is an inversion of one of the central tenets of adult education that adult education encourages or reinforces active participation in society. We will start our exploration with an examination of active participation in British society through the concept of citizenship.

Citizenship and active participation

The concept of citizenship underpins that of democracy but, in British society, 'citizenship' is an unfamiliar notion. The Commission on Citizenship (1990) found that the word was not in common use and when used it had a diversity of meanings. A reasonably representative definition of citizenship can be taken as how an individual activates him or herself to be able to consciously influence their own situation and the situation of others in a democratic society (Bron 1995). The Commission noted that many social factors such as poverty, ill-health, gender, race or age may disadvantage parts of the population and prevent their participation. They found that people do contribute voluntarily 'to the common good through the participation in, and the exercise of, civic duty' (p. 8). For example, nearly half the public had been involved in fund-raising and a third had helped to organise activities.

Crewe and Searing (1996) supported some of the findings of the Commission and found that citizenship is seen in Britain as civic engagement, that is, participation in the institutions of civil society. Rather than voting and other forms of electoral participation, the British see citizenship as, for example, working in local voluntary associations. So from a British perspective, civic engagement is involvement in social networks, in the groups, organisations and voluntary associations that connect citizens with the life of their communities. Motivations to engage in attention to political and public issues are reinforced through participation in informal groups and voluntary organisations and engagement in civic and communal activities from good neighbouring to charity giving. The more citizens are civically engaged, the more tolerant they are likely to be and the more willing to make sacrifices for the public good and the better prepared to respect and defend the rights of others (Putnam 1996).

But this civic engagement is reducing. Putnam (1996) found that most forms of collective political participation, including active involvement in political party work or attending meetings about town or school affairs, have declined by 25-50 per cent since 1965. Similarly, the time spent on informal socialising is down by a quarter while time devoted to clubs and organisations, participation and even nominal membership in voluntary organisations, including sports clubs, professional associations and trade unions, is also down. The causes seem to lie in longer working hours, more women working and the decline of traditional urban communities. However, the main culprit is television. This is an age-related factor, the young watch more television and are less involved in civic associations. Television privatises social time. Newspaper reading, on the other hand, is positively identified with participation. There is hence an interesting differentiation between different mass media effects on participation.

The conclusion of these surveys is that the level of civic engagement in our society is low. Even taking the very broad definition of involvement in voluntary organisations and churches, helping neighbours or attendance at public meetings, nearly one third of individuals do not engage in any of these activities and only 10 per cent engage 'only occasionally' in most of them (where occasionally is at most once a month).

Perspectives on participation in formal adult education provision

The paper now investigates whether, within the current paradigm of individualism, characteristics of the individual can be established which promote or hinder participation in adult education programmes. Current work in the area of participation in adult education tends to be located in the prevailing theoretical approach of the motivations-barriers paradigm (see for example NIACE 1996). Gooderham (1993) has developed a conceptual framework of perspectives on participation in adult education provision within which the core perspectives derive from this approach. His work builds on a chain of response model that in order for an individual to participate they must have a positive attitude to learning; they must judge the sum total of all outcomes of participation as being of value; and there must be courses available, in the widest sense, to the individual. In the case of adult education provision, this translates into the individual having a positive attitude to formal learning; the need for social mobility; lack of access to alternative channels of social mobility; and courses being available. He then identifies antecedent perspectives subsumable under the following headings: social origin; current normative reference group; current comparative reference group; age, gender and structure of supply. This contributes to a conceptual framework that both illuminates motivation for participation but also structural forces that hinder participation.

Activism in society/adult education

We now begin to draw these threads together. Hedoux (1981) in his study of participation in targeted programmes in French mining communities, discovered that participants in the programmes consisted of an active social minority, characterised by certain favourable attributes namely good material circumstances; greater mobility (ability to anticipate and instigate social change) and cultural familiarity (higher levels of schooling, extended social relationships and cultural practices). He observed that participation was strongly connected with the extent of an individual's integration into community life. Participants were generally leading a more diverse and intense social life than non-participants, and tended to be more involved in voluntary groups, political parties, unions, churches, and local cultural activities. In consequence, they had more contact with key local figures and local information networks. Courtney (1981) contends that both social and educational participation are bound up with factors such as occupational status and income which define an individual's standing in the community and, although variables such as age, sex, marital status, and place of residence play a part, educational participation is related to the perceptions of power and self-worth mediated through the instrumentality of these variables. Hence it may be that some of the same factors influence both social and educational participation and hence that those who participate actively in society are also more likely to participate in adult education. When individuals do participate in society they gain entry to local information networks and are therefore more likely to be aware of existing educational opportunities. They also have more contact with key local figures which may well increase perceptions of power and self-worth and hence the ability to anticipate and instigate social change. Fieldhouse (1985: 131) found that adult education did not so much alter students' views as galvanise them into more activity but at the same time noted that 'although there is little doubt that it generates a considerable amount of social activism, it reinforced activism as much as it caused it'.

Methodology

A questionnaire was devised, piloted and then distributed to a wide range of adult education courses in South West England. This asked for information about age, sex, educational background and class but concentrated on establishing the level of community activity of respondents.

Before examining the results, we need first to critically look at the process of data collection and the quality of the results. The number and range of courses chosen was designed to give a range of higher education (118 responses), further education (81 responses) and local authority (60 responses) provision for adults. The total number of responses was 259, a return of 77%. Sixty-six per cent were women, 34 percent men. A quarter were under the age of 30, half under 40 and three-quarters under 55. After discussions with the course directors, the questionnaires were sent with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the survey. The response rate was good but it would have been preferable to speak to the students directly and to have been on hand to answer their queries. The question which raised the most concern was that on social class where respondents were asked to assess their own class from the categories — upper-middle class, middle-class, lower-middle class, skilled working class and semi/unskilled working class. Most completed this question without comment but it was obviously puzzling to some and offensive to a few. Some clearly believed, along with John Major (the British Prime Minister, at the time of writing), that we live in a classless society and it is likely that this question was the reason that some questionnaires were not completed.

Results

Respondents were asked to list any organisations or societies of which they were or had been a member and indicate if they had had an active role. Examples given were trade union, religious group, political party, recreational group, women's organisation, community group and pressure group. Next they were asked to list any voluntary activity to which they had made an active contribution. Examples given were school governor, local councillor and meals on wheels. Results were divided into three categories: non-active, membership only or active involvement. Of the 259 respondents, 145 (58 per cent) were active in these or similar groups and organisations, 51 (20 per cent) were members only and 55 (22 per cent) did not list any activity. Activities listed were very diverse and included working with the disabled, helping with schools, playgroups and youth groups and clubs, carnival committee, union negotiator, active membership of political parties, office with women's organisation such as the Mothers' union, meals on wheels, work with environmental groups and pressure groups, charity work, local amateur dramatics and church activities. The group with membership only usually listed trade union membership. Many active respondents were also members of trade unions and pressure groups such as Greenpeace.

In the allowed word length for this paper there is only space to summarise the findings of the survey. A fuller analysis will be published elsewhere. There was little gender difference in social activity with 56 per cent of the women and 59 per cent of the men being socially active. Men were more inclined to be non-active and women more inclined to be member only. School leaving age is a factor with 66 per cent of those who left between 17 and 19 being active as compared to 53 per cent of those leaving at 16 or younger. Age is certainly significant with only 34 per cent of under 35 year-olds being active as compared to 74 per cent of over 35s. A startling 13 out of the 14 over 70s were active. Class is also clearly important with 5 per cent of the sample being upper middle class and 73 per cent of these being active. The corresponding figures for other groups was: middle class 49 and 67; lower-middle class 18 and 61; skilled working class 19 and 31; and semi- or unskilled working class 8 and 44. Respondents were asked to give their own class. (The blip in the figures for the last two categories has occurred in previous research by the author and merits further investigation.)

Fifty-eight per cent of the trial group were active in society and of these many were obviously very active. If membership of an organisation such as trade unions is added, then the total is 78 per cent. This is a high proportion given the level of social activity in the general population noted earlier in the paper and would indicate that adult education attracts active citizens. This supports Hedoux's contention that participation is strongly connected to the extent of an individual's integration into community life. To extend Courtney's proposal outlined earlier, it may be that active participation in society increases an individual's perception of power and self-worth. This may to fulfil Gooderham's requirement outlined earlier for a positive attitude to learning and a reasonable anticipation of success. The middle class nature of all educational institutions may make them a more natural next step for middle class than for working class individuals. But interestingly, few (22 per cent) considered that their experience of adult education had or would result in their playing a more active part in public or community life in future. Some (31 per cent) felt that it would make them more effective in their current activity and 47 per cent felt that their experience of adult education would not result in them playing a more active part in public or

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community life in future. This suggests that adult education reinforces social activity rather than initiates it, as suggested by Fieldhouse.

Social activity

There are several issues to discuss around the notion of social activity as used in this paper. Even within the limited definition of activity in organisations, societies and voluntary activities, there are problems. The questionnaires were completed mainly in class time and so quickly. With no warning, activities may have been overlooked. The trigger examples may have limited the direction of respondents' thinking. More seriously there are of course many other activities that could be included in a definition of social activity. Adults not participating in social movements, community work and so on, may still be actively functioning in society through work and their families. Even accepting the definition given and the tentative conclusion that adult education attracts the socially active, this very social activity may account for anecdotal evidence that older students sometimes drop out because they are too busy in the rest of their lives.

Other factors come into play in this link between social activity and adult education. There is evidence of apathy in our society but also active engagement in those parts of society where people feel at home. Membership of locally based voluntary movements has increased. However, these bodies often have members who are already highly educated and informal social exclusionary practices exist which deterred the educationally less-advantaged from involvement. Similarly, unemployment is a mechanism for excluding individuals from participation in labour an activity which is a central source of social networks, public esteem and individual identity (Field 1995).

There is also an issue around the intrinsic nature of study itself. It is arguable that education in the form valued in our education system is individualistic, competitive, located in reading the literature and writing essays, that is, essentially anti-social. Adult educators who see education as a means of encouraging and initiating social or collectivist activity may be concerned at the suggestion that the effect of (in particularly higher) education may be to destroy that very quality in people. Creditalisation means teaching is geared to individual achievement possibly at the expense of collective learning and perhaps subsequent collectivist involvement.

Conclusion

Educationalists would argue that education helps the individual gain a sense of being a person in society. This paper suggests that it is mainly those who have already gained that sense that engage in adult education. Individuals participate not as a result of targeting by providers but though a process of self-selection. This research suggests that one of the factors which affects this process is social activity. If this is the case, this has implications for recruitment. Rather than blanket publicity, a more effective approach might be to advertise through social groups and organisation. But it has more serious implications for providers. If we are concerned to bring 'different' groups into education, it implies that we may need to look to the non-participants in society. The very real problem here, as always, is how to reach this group. However, even knowing that social activity may increase the likelihood of participation may help our understanding of non-participating groups. Adult education does not choose its students, they choose (or do not choose) adult education. The societal forces acting now and in their past that inform and shape the decision process are very powerful, the more so for being so frequently invisible and subconscious. They influence not only participation in education, which is serious but also participation in society which is the foundation of democracy.

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Learning organisations: evaluating learning and results

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The learning organisation model is being applied as a process to improve organisational performance. Becoming a learning organisation involves adopting a holistic, systemic focus (Senge 1990; Watkins and Marsick 1993). Companies such as Ford Motor, Coca-Cola, Nortel, Land O'Lakes, and Johnsonville Foods have documented performance success as a result of such initiatives (Watkins and Marsick 1996). This article shares a participant evaluation of a comprehensive learning organisation implementation at the Electrical and Fuel Handling Division (EFHD) of Ford Motor Company. EFHD is part of the automotive components industry, one of the largest industries in the world. EFHD supplies starters, alternators, wiper motors, injectors, fuel pumps, cell distributorless ignitions, ignition coils, and throttle bodies to Ford and other automobile manufacturers on a global level.

Theoretical framework

The learning organisation notion grew out of the discipline of systems thinking. It is an alternative to the machine age logic behind workplace design and management. The prevailing machine or mechanistic model, is founded on the principles of hierarchy, control, fragmentation and reductionism. The systems perspective recognises that seeking organisational control is futile. Instead, systems thinkers pursue prediction based on patterns and behaviours over time, recognise that natural systems are self-organising and that order evolves from disorderly, chaotic processes. Harnessing workplace learning has been suggested as an answer to shifting from the machine age to the systems age. The essence of the learning organisation is to capture, share and facilitate the learning that is naturally occurring in the organisation. The EFHD story provides an outstanding model and practice for effectively implementing a learning organisation.

Learning organisation: EFHD's strategic imperative

EFHD embraced Peter Senge's model from the 1990 book *The Fifth Discipline* as a framework for implementing the learning organisation. EFHD adopted a learning organisation model based on the conviction that the key to becoming a best-in-class, high performing organisation is through the ability to learn faster and more effectively than the competition. EFHD's Vision states, 'As a Learning Organisation, we will generate a high level of customer satisfaction by providing subsystems, products, and services with best-in-class quality and best-in-class costs.' Intended results include: learn faster than the competition, achieve maximum value and zero waste, optimise knowledge *and* understanding, and use energy to be a best-in-class producer (rather than fighting political battles). EFHD's Strategic Initiative proposes, 'To be an organisation that fosters the five disciplines of the Learning Organisation; specifically, Systems Thinking, Personal Mastery, Shared Vision, Team Learning, and Mental Models' (for definition of the disciplines see Senge 1990). EFHD has worked to create an infrastructure supportive of learning that incorporates: cultivating a supportive culture, promoting learning organisation awareness, building capacity and involvement, and adopting a community focus.

EFHD began the learning organisation initiative in 1992 with the formation of the Product Launch Success Team, chartered to create high performance launch processes of new and current product lines. Simultaneously, the executive management (Division Operating Committee) began its efforts to create a culture based on team learning and shared vision. Although becoming a learning organisation is a strategic imperative of EFHD, participation in the process is entirely voluntary. Today, there are over 30 active team learning projects involving more than 1200 EFHD employees.

Research questions

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the implementation of a learning organisation at EFHD using the company's learning model and systems dynamics tools. Guiding questions included: 1) What sustains the process? 2) What prevents the effective implementation of a learning organisation process? and 3) What are the results of implementation beyond obvious performance improvements?

Methodology

A unique qualitative approach was used that applied action learning via the EFHD learning model as a framework for data collection and analysis. Data were collected over a three year period from 1993-1996. Participants were a globally and hierarchically diverse sample of EFHD employees who voluntarily participated in a sixty-hour introductory course on the theory and practice of the learning organisation. Data were collected through over 500 hours of participant observation in both training and work settings, using semi-structured post-training interviews with 25 employees, written surveys, electronic mail, journals, dialogue meetings, and two sessions to evaluate the process using systems dynamics tools and the EFHD learning model.

This study occurred over a three year period of qualitative evaluation of the learning organisation implementation at EFHD. It focuses on the employee evaluation of the process using EFHD's learning organisation model and tools. Participants in the study participated both by providing and analysing data. Two separate employee groups participated representing a cross section of the workforce. Twenty employees participated in the process.

The Learning Model, now used in all EFHD learning projects, was developed by the Product Launch Success Team and used as a framework for collecting data in this study. This framework for action learning at EFHD follows a six step cycle:

1. Provide process
2. Dialogue
3. Generate issues
4. Determine critical clusters (issues)
5. Action
6. Determine success

The model is circular representing a continuous loop of learning that can be begun at any point (Bierema and Berdish 1996a). This model, grounded in action learning and systems thinking, is used to reveal patterns that may not be obvious in day-to-day operations of the organisation.

Data were analysed using the constant-comparative technique. Data were organised into themes using the systems dynamics tools of hexagons (Idon 1992) and causal loops (Brassard 1989). Trustworthiness of the data was verified through the use of multiple data sources, member checks, and longitudinal data collection. EFHD employees also assisted in the data analysis process.

Results and conclusions

A previous study (Bierema and Berdish 1996b) detailed EFHD's remarkable performance results including: a dramatic financial turnaround, improved employee attitude surveys, company leadership in achieving total productive maintenance checkpoints, and new product launches that exceeded budget objectives in quality, costs, and timing. The study also shared learning performance with results indicating that learning was significant on personal, collective, and organisational levels.

This study identified eleven issues related to the learning organisation implementation. Through action learning sessions, issues were generated and organised by critical clusters. A content analysis was done on the clusters to distil the key patterns among the clusters. Three categories emerged from the causal loop and content analysis of the clusters: Shared vision, performance, and learning. Each will be discussed. The hexagon categories are listed in the following table.

Shared Vision	**Performance**	**Learning**
Tensions	Tensions	Tensions
Awareness	Actions	Dialogue—skill set
Mixed Messages	Dialogue +/-	Mixed Messages
Sustaining Process	Leftovers	Better Sex
	Mixed messages	Sustaining Process

Shared vision

Cultivating a shared sense of vision is a key aspect of creating a learning organisation. Upon evaluation, participant concerns related to articulating, sustaining and advancing the vision. They felt that the EFHD definition of a learning organisation was still foggy and that there were inconsistent definitions of the vision held in the organisation. The employees also wondered how the learning organisation vision fit with the business plan and how it impacted daily functioning. Employees were also concerned about sustaining the vision in the midst of a challenging competitive environment with competing demands on everyone's time. They were discontented with the level of application of learning organisation principles and tools and the degree of hourly personnel's access to the vision. The employees felt a deep sense of disappointment that learning organisation follow-up had been neither comprehensive nor consistent. This distress was not fuelled by anger, but by a sense of lost opportunity to advance the learning organisation understanding and process. There was also anxiety around the process of advancing the theory and practice of the learning organisation beyond the introductory training and learning teams that had been established. Although the learning organisation vision aspect was problematic for employees, the experience of participating in the introductory course and learning teams resulted in a high level of enthusiasm and willingness to continue participation.

Performance

The notion of performance was tension ridden as employees struggled to balance meeting production demands with applying learning organisation principles and standards of behaviour. Employees felt particularly powerless when it came to resolving this tension. They viewed the organisation as suffering from short term reactiveness to productivity issues at the expense of attending to long term systemic issues such as learning. Employees reported inconsistent application learning organisation values. For instance, the culture was more oriented toward reacting and responding to crises in the heat of the moment, versus creating more proactive structures that prevented such behaviour patterns in the system. Understanding what performance means in a learning organisation was also a source of tension. Is it high productivity?

High quality? Open, honest communication? Superior learning? Knowledge advocacy? Admitting 'I don't know?' All of these? Some of these? None of these? These questions nagged the participants in the hexagon sessions.

Learning

Learning as a result of the learning organisation process was the most positive, often unexpected outcome of the process. Notably, learning was prominent on an individual level with significant reporting of self-directed learning projects inspired by the learning organisation implementation. The most often cited learning experiences on both individual and team levels were employing the techniques of dialogue and the learning model. While not without their challenges, these processes were regarded as a useful tools when used correctly. The action learning projects and use of the learning model were also effective in helping teams solve organisational problems. These processes won wide support initially. Eventually they broke down, causing a higher degree of reluctance to use them. Employees were unsure of how to correct their errors in applying the process and felt that "tutorial" support was lacking. Upon reflection, the participants felt that they should have pursued using the new tools more vigorously. Participants were aware of forces that prevented them from learning such as time pressures, organisational politics, non-supportive supervisors/colleagues, confusion over the process, and lack of application opportunities. Time pressures were blamed with interfering with learning on all levels. While dialogue and action learning were important in the implementation, they were also the skills that participants felt needed more development. There were also unexpected benefits of the organisation's quest to become a learning organisation. Participants cited improved family relationships, better ability to communicate, clearer focus on personal goals, new perspectives on old problems, and improved teamwork.

Implications

What can be learned from EFHD's experience? EFHD has 'walked the talk' by continuously learning while being an international leader in learning organisation implementation. As there are no recipes or fixed states of being a learning organisation, EFHD's has experienced a continuous cycle of learning and adjustment as it applies new lessons to its learning organisation processes.

Earlier research on the EFHD implementation revealed that the key variables responsible for success were rooted in fostering individual and team learning while creating an infrastructure supportive of both learning and practice. The 1997 evaluation suggests that the EFHD infrastructure needs fine-tuning in the areas of creating shared vision, specifying and demonstrating performance objectives in the context of a learning organisation, and continuing the facilitation, capturing and sharing of learning on both individual and collective levels. Further, these opportunities for improvement must be considered in terms of the learners, learning processes and learning infrastructure in the EFHD system.

The employee evaluation raises issues that deserve attention, but also celebration. This process is valuable as a model of learning organisation evaluation. It also perpetuates the EFHD learning model by using action learning to create new knowledge about the learning organisation process. Through the process, EFHD has promoted employee development, created an evaluation and practised the tools of the process.

Learners

EFHD's sometimes turbulent application of the learning organisation points to a larger conflict. The Cartesian model of organisational design favouring hierarchy and control that functions to fragment and alienate is butting heads against the new Systems model that values fluidity, self-organisation and information. Not surprisingly, organisations based on mechanistic models are not only rigidly mechanical, but also insensitive to adult learning and development across the lifespan. Merriam and Caffarella observe that, 'Learning in adulthood is an intensely personal activity' (1991, xi). Yet, organisations function to organise, control and often constrain workplace development. Merriam and Caffarella also estimate that ninety percent of the population is involved with at least one self-directed learning activity a year (1991, 54), and Marsick and Watkins (1990) observe that much of the learning in the workplace is either incidental or unintended. What is known about adults as self-directed learners is that they need personal autonomy, they have the willingness and ability to manage their own learning, they need a context that gives them control over their learning, and they meet learning goals without the use of formal institutions or methods (Candy 1991). In spite of this, much of the development that occurs in the workplace is formal, productivity based, and fragmented. Managers who believe that employees are motivated only to serve the corporate interest are missing the opportunity to capture the inherent energy and enthusiasm that adults bring to their personal learning. Just as adult educators function as enablers of learning, so too must organisational leaders act to facilitate the learning process in a learning organisation. The EFHD experience has demonstrated that the employees value the learning organisation process and see its usefulness not only at work, but in life. Further, the EFHD experience documents that the learning organisation process has motivated significant number self-directed learning projects (Bierema and

Berdish 1996b).

Learning process

At EFHD, action learning is applied to share stories and distill learning from them. EFHD created its learning model to both capture and share learning. The issue that employees repeatedly raised was that inconsistent application of the model was hurting the process. When the learning model is not applied, the customary structures for problem solving, learning, and decision making prevail. Not only must the learning model be better applied, but the structures preventing its more global application must be understood. EFHD's current process is to apply the learning model in a haphazard fashion. At the root of the issue is the practice of single versus double loop learning. Argyris concludes that most organisational learning is single loop, and breaking out of that cycle to a double loop process is difficult. Single-loop learning occurs when organisational errors are discovered and corrected without questioning or altering the underlying values of the system. Argyris (1992) suggests that this phenomenon occurs on individual, group, intergroup, organisational, or interorganisational levels. He defines double-loop learning as occurring when mismatches are corrected by first examining and altering the governing variables and then the actions. Argyris (1992) contends that most organisations, often unconsciously, create learning systems that suppress double-loop inquiry, making it problematic for even well designed information systems to be effective. This phenomenon appears to be impacting EFHD. Double loop learning cannot happen without changing the models of organisational structures and processes presently existing. The EFHD application of the learning model — which incorporates double loop learning — is inconsistent. To move the process to the next level, the learning infrastructure will require further attention to help ensure a more global and consistent application of the learning organisation process. Watkins and Marsick (1996) conclude that learning organisations must: cultivate a learning habit in people, regularly audit the knowledge capital, and embed a learning infrastructure. EFHD has done this. The current task is to fine-tune the learning infrastructure to move to the next level.

Infrastructure

Argyris notes that, 'Organisations learn through individuals acting as agents for them. The individuals' learning activities, in turn, are facilitated or inhibited by an ecological system that may be called an organisational learning system' (1992, 123). The 'ecological system', or infrastructure at EHFD oscillates between the facilitation and inhibition of learning. A system that oscillates can quickly neutralise change efforts. When a structure is not working well there is tension. When a structure is challenged, there is more tension, as the immediate reaction is resistance to the change. Fritz observes that organisational change efforts rarely result in change because, 'Change has been imposed on top of inadequate existing structures' (1996, xiii). There are fundamental structural principles that most physical structures are constructed according to. Yet, the idea of structural integrity has not transferred to organisational design or management. Some of the issues raised on the EFHD evaluation point to the structure issue.

From a structural perspective, it is important that EFHD employees and leaders focus not on short term events such as the learning organisation course, enthusiasm, poor and effective instances of management support, isolated team failures and successes, but rather, focus its attention on the patterns, structures and mental models that are both facilitating and restraining EFHD's progress. The dialogue and action learning processes stand out as significant symbols of creating new structures that have delivered positive results. The dialogue process needs strengthening and other similar tools need to be applied.

The infrastructure is where EFHD has leverage. Surfacing and challenging the individual and collective assumptions about what it means to be an automotive company, local employer, player in the global economy, *and* a learning organisation are critical to EFHD's continued development as a learning organisation. There is oscillation on the issues of shared vision and performance, that while not hurting the company this inconsistency puts it into a neutral pattern of moving forward, then backward. The task is to use the tensions to propel movement toward the vision, not distract from it. There is a significant among of energy in the individual and collective learning processes at EFHD. Continued refinement and use of the learning model is imperative for continued development as a learning organisation.

The EFHD experience is a significant one for those interested in the pros and cons of learning organisation implementation. As previously stated, the Ford experience demonstrates clear, measurable performance gains from this process. The objective of the participant evaluation was to look at less tangible issues such as learning and application of the process. This study is not without its limitations. Approximately one fifth of the division's 6000 employees, worldwide, have participated in the learning organisation process to date. It is a qualitative study, thus, our goal was not to survey hundreds of participants, but rather to gain a perspective on how a representative group of employees is using (not using) the process.

The EFHD experience offers a glimpse of the trials and tribulations of becoming a learning organisation.

Learning organisations have the advantage of turning their learning upon themselves in an effort to improve their process and structure. EFHD offers a model of not only becoming a learning organisation, but applying the process toward moving learning to the next level.

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'Bridging the gap'? Reflections on the outcomes of a 'cross-border' initiative designed to facilitate access and success in higher education for disadvantaged adults

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The paper argues that any examination of an initiative in the field of adult returners to education needs to be placed within a broader policy framework such as that developed by Esland (1994). This is because the origins of a 'cross-border' development between further and higher education, in order to promote access and success in higher education for educationally disadvantaged adults lie, in part, in the political and economic agendas of central government. The paper, therefore, will first identify the wider policy framework which gave rise to the initiative. It describes the objectives of the particular institutions concerned in setting up a group-entry scheme to higher education. The findings of a longitudinal study of the 'access' students are then examined. These are assessed in the light of the objectives of the various interested parties: the 'progressives' who value education as a means of empowering groups who have benefited least from formal schooling; and the 'modernisers' who are set on ensuring that the education system is more responsive to the needs of the economy[1] When 'drop-out' is analysed in terms of those 'stopping-out' and 'moving-on' the access initiative can be seen as meeting the objectives of both parties. The potential of such schemes, however, is threatened by the criteria for funding higher education. The opportunities for educationally disadvantaged adults to enter higher education may, in the future be marginalised.

The expansion of higher education: the policy framework

Economic factors

The theory of human capital has long linked national economic growth with investment in education; it does not go unnoticed that the countries which are the most economically successful are those where there is a high participation rate in higher education. Furthermore, changes in technology have led to a major restructuring of the labour force. The demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour has declined dramatically and the labour market requires people with good generic skills and who are, therefore, flexible and adaptable to meet the new circumstances. To meet this need Britain increased the proportion of young people entering higher education from one in eight to one in three in less than a decade[2] and also expanded the opportunities for adults to return to education as mature students[3]. Whilst, however, the government's objective was to increase the participation rate in higher education, it was also concerned to minimise the cost to the Exchequer. Hence, in 1990 the government froze the maintenance award for full-time students at £2,265 and introduced a system of loans. By 1993 the demand for full-time places had exceeded the supply[4]. Concerned to continue the expansion of higher education at minimum cost, the Secretary of State for Education urged the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFC) 'to stimulate part-time study through its funding' (DFE, 1993).

Political factors

In bringing together all the institutions of higher education under the aegis of the HEFC in 1992, albeit within the separate constituencies of England, Scotland and Wales, the Government created one market place over which it could exercise control. Greater efficiency, it was believed, would ensue if institutions competed for resources for teaching and research purposes and students competed for places.

Management

One potential problem which the government foresaw in the expansion of intake into higher education, without a proportionate increase in the institutions resources, was a threat to academic standards. To safeguard against this, it instituted a number of controls through the introduction of the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) and the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). Most particularly, it sought to control the flow of resources to HE institutions by funding only those registered students who completed the year in 'good standing' (that is those students within the quota agreed who survived the course and sat the examination). The objectives of central government were quite clear; it wished to increase participation rates in higher education without increasing the government's borrowing requirement (PBR). In terms of the rhetoric of 'lifelong learning' the policy-makers were 'modernisers': that is they favoured the expansion of higher education because the changes in the economy necessitated a more flexible and adaptable workforce than hitherto.

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[1] The terms 'progressives' and 'modernisers' are employed by Edwards and Raggatt (1996, 43) in a typology of groups concerned with the provision of adult learners. Their typology is an adaptation of the analysis by Ball (1990).

[2] The Age Participation Index (API) rose from 12.4 per cent in 1979 to 17.1 per cent in 1989 (DES 1991). In 1993, John Patten, the Higher Education Secretary announced that the Government target of a third of young people in HE by 2000 had been reached (*The Guardian*, 1 December 1993).

[3] Higher Education institutions were encouraged to increase their intake of mature students (DES 1987; Scottish Department, 1988).

[4] *The Guardian*, 16 February, 1993.

An institutional initiative: the group entry scheme

Among the institutions responding to the desired expansion of higher education were a university employing 'supported open learning' and a number of adult education institutes (AEIs) who remained under the control of LEAs. It was a 'cross-border' initiative. An important *raison d'être* of the establishment of this particular university was that it would provide an opportunity for adults who had missed out at an earlier point in their career. Much concern, however, was evident in the surveys undertaken over an extended period of time, of the low success rate of those students who had no formal entry qualifications[5]. Hence, the university was interested in collaborating with a number of AEIs who were interested to provide preparatory courses for adults returning to education so as to provide them with the opportunity to gain entry to higher education. The AEIs were located in inner city areas where local education authorities were committed to equal opportunities policies. In relation to the support for 'lifelong' learning both the AEIs and the university interests could be labelled as 'progressive'; it was an essential part of their mission to provide education to groups in the local community who had benefited least from formal schooling.

Under the arrangement between the parties, the 'access' element of the initiative was provided by the AEIs. These introductory course groups provided an ongoing and supportive framework in which students received the study skills support and subject-based preparation. They could then begin a first-level course at the university. The tutor on the 'access' element of the course became the tutor for the same group of students in their first year of study with the university.

The initial evaluation

Initial evaluations of the group-entry schemes in 1991/92 revealed that the initial objectives of recruiting from among the previously identified educationally deprived groups in the inner city adult population had been met[6]. One of the evaluative studies (Bird and Lown 1992), for example, indicated that two-thirds of all students were women. One third of the total were black or members of ethnic minority groups. Almost a half of the students had no qualifications at all. Only six of the 47 students in the 1992 evaluative study had not met one or other of the educational deprivation access criteria. Moreover, in relation to the objective of facilitating study skills, such courses were judged by the students to have been very largely successful. The most frequently mentioned benefits by the students of the group-entry scheme course were the preparation given for undergraduate study, the intellectual stimulation experienced and the development of confidence. Others referred to the valuable opportunity of meeting regularly and gaining more awareness and understanding of the subject area before studying at degree level. The great majority of students on the group entry schemes went on to enrol on the university's first-level courses. Some students, it was noted, had reservations about the requisite writing skills and others — more than a quarter (28%) in one group — anticipated problems in paying their fees (Bird and Lown, 1992). Nonetheless, the early evaluations indicated that the group entry schemes had been successful in facilitating access to higher education for some educationally disadvantaged groups. Interest then focused on how the group-entry scheme students faired subsequently. Their progress was thus monitored over a four-year period. .

The longitudinal study

The purpose of the longitudinal study was to ascertain whether the students who had the benefit of an 'access' course were more likely to obtain a BA degree than those students with 'low' qualifications who had not benefited from this experience. Comparisons of the group-entry scheme students with the profile of students in the university indicated that in broad terms they were not dissimilar: in terms of gender, (56% were female compared to 51% nationally); in relation to age, the group entry scheme students were almost virtually identical to the national distribution (i.e. 10% under 25 years, 80% 25-49 years and 10% over 50 years); and the proportion with a disability was not dissimilar (6% compared to 5% nationally). The main difference, was the proportion of the group-entry students who were of an ethnic minority group (33% compared to less than 3% nationally) (Bird and Lown 1992). The most important factor, therefore, to note in making comparisons between the performance rates of the group-entry-scheme students and that of the university students more generally was the disproportionate number of group-entry scheme students who had 'low' qualifications and who were of ethnic minority origin. Also noted was the fact that the London region, where the 'cross-border' initiative took place, was the region with the biggest problem of student retention.

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[5] It was noted that the graduation rate for those students who had no formal entry qualifications had declined (Woodley 1987, 4). In the period 1980-86 only 40 per cent of those with low or no entry qualifications succeeded in getting a degree. Students living in the London region had the lowest retention and performance rate of any region

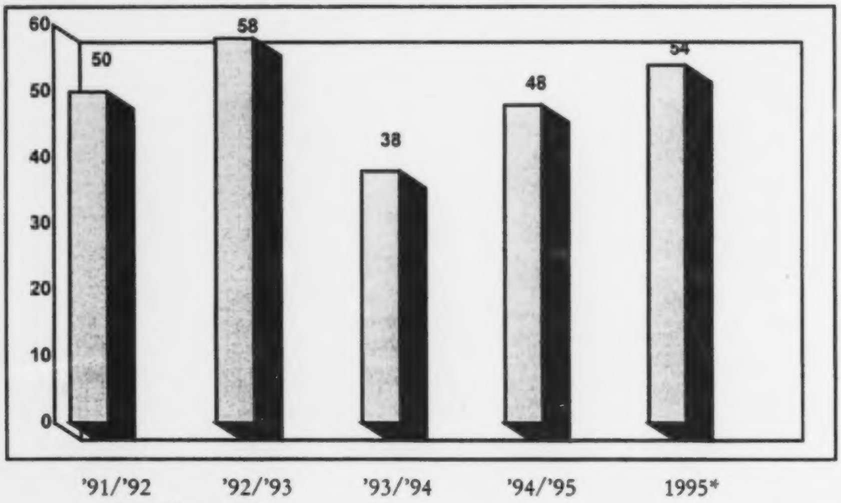
[6] In earlier decades the proportion of women entering full-time higher education was less than that of men. For example, in 1979 the proportion of women was 41 per cent (DES 1991). Ethnic minority groups were also under-represented. A survey of access students in inner London in the late eighties indicated that 57 per cent were black, indicating the interest of black people in obtaining access to higher education (ILEA 1988).

Outcomes of the longitudinal study

Student recruitment

Interest focused on the performance of students in their first and subsequent years of study. In their first year of study all students took a level-one course. In the second year some students would have taken another level-one course, whilst others would have taken a level-two course. Performance was measured by the proportion of group-entry scheme students, who finally registered and who obtained at least a half credit. The figures for each successive year of study are given in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: The proportion of group-entry students who finally registered who obtained at least a half credit



* 1991 cohort only

In the first year of study a half of students in the group entry scheme obtained a credit. In the second year the pass rate increased to 58 per cent. In part, this was because some of those who were unsuccessful in obtaining credit had not registered for a second year. In the third year the proportion obtaining credit dropped to 38 per cent, probably reflecting the fact that the majority of the original group entry students were moving on from level-one to level-two courses. Thereafter, the proportion obtaining credit increased in the fifth and sixth years of study (48% and 54% respectively). But the group-entry students performed less well than other students in the university who had low entry qualifications (in the period 1992-95, 45% of group entry students obtained a course credit compared to 65% students nationally who had low entry qualifications). It was ascertained that after five years of study three of the 1991 cohort of group-entry students had obtained their BA degree and nine others were still registering for courses.

It would appear also that the group-entry students performed less well than students generally in the London region. For example, in 1991, fifty per cent of the group-entry scheme students obtained a credit, compared to 72 per cent of the new London students. This was not unanticipated because it was known that a higher proportion of the group-entry students (60 %) lacked academic experience (as indicated by their 'low' entry qualifications).

Student retention

Figure 2 indicates the number of group-entry students who registered for a first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth year of study. (Two of the original 100 group-entry scheme students did not finally register with the university because they had opted for higher education on a full-time basis.)

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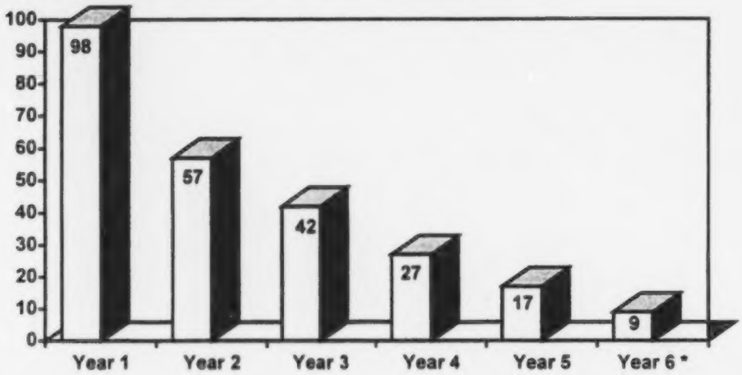
Figure 2: The retention of students from the group-entry schemes 1991/92
The number of group-entry students registering over five successive years.



Rate of retention 58% 74% 64% 63% * 1991 cohort only

The rate of retention for students from their first to their second year of study was 58 per cent (i.e. 57 of the original 98 students, who finally registered in their first year, enrolled and finally registered for a course the following year). The retention rate of students in their second year of study increased to 74 per cent. In the third and fourth year it fell to 64 per cent and 63 per cent, respectively. The noticeably higher rate in the second year was probably because a substantial proportion, almost a half of the students, were taking a second level-one course. By January 1996 of the 98 students who had finally registered in 1991 or 1992, only 13 were still registering for courses (9 from the 1991 cohort and four from the 1992 cohort). And three students had graduated. What had happened to the other 82 persons?

The 'follow-up' study

At the time the 'follow-up' study was undertaken, Spring 1995, there were 71 people who had not continued with their OU courses. Of these it was possible to obtain a telephone number for 61 and much effort was expended in endeavouring to contact these former students. Information was obtained from 28 persons (i.e. almost a half of those who had, apparently, 'dropped-out' at that time). All of those with whom contact was made were agreeable to a telephone interview (a response rate of 100%).

What were the reasons given for not continuing with the OU?

Drop-out?

The former students were asked, 'Why did you not continue with your OU studies?' For many people there was more than one factor which had led to their withdrawal. The most frequent reasons given were: a change in home circumstances (50%); a change in work circumstances (36%); ill-health (14%); the course was too difficult (10%); inability to pay the fees (7%); and the course was not interesting (7%). It was evident that being involved in part-time study for many people had to be balanced with family and work commitments. When these demands intruded unduly upon the student's time and energy the student's capacity to study suffered and, under pressure from one source or another, the person had withdrawn. Ill-health, either that of the student, or that of a member of the family member, had also led to the person's withdrawal in some cases.

More difficult to ascertain were the problems which students had experienced with the academic requirements of the course and which they might have been more reluctant to acknowledge as a compelling reason for their withdrawal. All those who admitted to finding the course difficult were people who had 'dropped-out' in the first year. The problem, specifically identified, was the lack of skills with English.

Also sensitive and difficult to ascertain was information relating to finance. Seven per cent of people admitted to having financial problems and the records did indicate that 10 per cent of the group entry scheme students were listed as debtors and would, therefore, have been unable to continue with their studies until the debt had been paid.

However, only a small minority of students (7%), who had apparently 'dropped-out', said that they had not found the university experience worthwhile. For the most part, even those who had withdrawn after the first year, said, that they had found the course 'interesting', 'enjoyable', an 'awakening' and a 'broadening' experience. Some felt that they had begun to develop the reading and writing skills that they needed. For those who had been inadequately prepared, at its worst, the university could be said to have been a sobering experience but not a negative one. As one person said, 'I felt belittled but at the same time it gave me a positive attitude that I could do it. I enjoyed the reading and learnt something from that'.

The overwhelming impression which is gained from the comments of those who 'dropped-out' in the first year was that an accumulation of circumstances had prompted their withdrawal. The reasons given were infinite and various: financial problems, unemployment, ill-health (a kidney transplant and hernia operation) and unforeseen family commitments as a result of separation, divorce and bereavement. Identifying the prime reason was an impossible task. But, particularly evident in the first year were the problems which resulted from a lack of study skills. When a person had struggled with the academic requirements of the course and had also to cope with work or family commitments, then, whilst it might have been the personal work and family problems which triggered their withdrawal, their lack of study skills was perhaps a rather more important factor in their 'dropping-out' than they were, perhaps, willing to acknowledge. Hence, it was likely that a lack of preparedness for academic work, particularly in the first year, was a more important factor in explaining 'drop-out' than is indicated in the figures above.

The increase in the academic demands of courses, coupled with the reduction in student support available, as students move from level-one to level-two courses, was also a reason for withdrawal at that point. Certainly, it was known by tutors that the problems which some people experienced with written English persisted well beyond the first year. But, there were other reasons why students did not re-register and this was less a case of 'dropping-out' but more a case of 'stopping-out' and moving-on'.

Stopping-out

Two people who had not finally registered with the university in 1991 had opted for full-time higher education. Another two students who had apparently 'dropped-out' were in fact taking a year out from studying and planning to return the following year. In addition, there were also eleven people who, unprompted, expressed an interest in returning to study with the university at some later date. In total, therefore, there were known to be a substantial proportion (43%) who expressed an interested in returning to study, some with the university but others in vocational courses. 'Stopping-out' was, therefore, the more appropriate term to describe the situation of almost a half of those who had discontinued with their university studies.

'Moving-on'

Over a quarter (27%) of the apparent 'drop-outs', it also materialised, had not continued with the university because they had registered for courses in other institutions, sometimes for degree courses on a full-time basis. Some had enrolled for vocational courses such as counselling, teaching and policing. Those, it was noted, most likely to move from the university to other institutions for full-time degree courses were those who had completed the second and third year of study (four and three students respectively). One apparent 'drop-out' who left the university at the end of the first year enrolled for a RSA counselling certificate.

There were approximately another quarter (27%) of apparent 'drop-outs', it materialised, who had not continued with their university studies for reasons connected with their employment. A number had changed their type of work; others had been promoted, relocated or, in one case, posted abroad. With one exception (a student in the third year) all those not continuing with the university for reasons connected with work were those who were in the first or second year of study (four and three students respectively). One former student who left after completing the first-level course in technology attributed the course credit obtained as having enabled him to get a job in computers with British Telecom.

Another example of those who might be said to have been 'moving-on', as opposed to 'dropping-out', were those who probably had never envisaged completing a BA degree. One such person was a widow of 63 years who enrolled for a first-level course because she wanted to meet people. The study of second level courses, with the prospect of a reduction in tutorial support, did not appeal to her. She had since taken a course at the City University to qualify as a guide to the City of London. Over half the students (54%) it was revealed had 'moved-on'.

One of the factors which may account for the lower rate of retention of students in the London region may be that this was an area where there were greater opportunities in the labour market. But also a wider range of educational opportunities were available. It was known that the experience of studying had developed students' self confidence and if it had also raised their awareness of other avenues of progression then 'opting-out' and 'moving-on' must be seen in a positive light.

The picture which emerged from the telephone survey of former students was complex. It was certainly not depressing in the way in which an initial glance at the figures on attrition suggested. Although only three group-entry scheme students had graduated at the time of the 'follow-up' study, there were another 13 students still registered with the university from the original intake of 98 students. But there was a high proportion of beneficial outcomes recorded. True, there was a 'revolving door' as some people chose not to continue. But the experience of studying with the university had had the effect of opening up other alternatives as was indicated by the fact that so many expressed an interest in returning at some later date. It would appear that people were not demoralised by the experience — 'I see studying as an on-going thing throughout life', remarked one person who had not continued beyond the first year.

Discussion

This study was illuminating in a number of respects. First, it established that the establishment of group-entry schemes was not a panacea for student attrition. While such schemes served a valuable function in providing access to higher education for previously educationally disadvantaged groups, the short introductory nature of the course proved an insufficient foundation for many people on which to build a BA degree. Only a small proportion (an estimated 15%) were likely to succeed in this respect. Second, it established that in spite of the many difficulties which adults returning to education faced and the personal traumas which they often had to surmount, the experience of studying with the university was, almost without exception seen in positive terms. It was evident that most people were 'opting out' rather than 'dropping-out'. Some hoped to return to study at a later date. The experience had opened up other avenues for people in terms of 'whetting their appetite' for other courses and had facilitated access to employment. As far as the 'progressive' educational interests were concerned the 'cross-border' initiative could be viewed in a beneficial light. In their view, there were other successful outcome measures other than the number of students who obtained degrees. Equally, the 'modernisers' might also view the scheme beneficial in terms of the numbers of students who subsequently opted for vocational courses, obtained employment and promotion. Opportunities for adults to return to education are increasingly important in a society which requires flexibility, adaptability and openness to change.

The future viability of 'cross-border' initiatives, however, is likely to be determined by the criteria for resourcing higher education. In an educational market place where institutions are funded according to the numbers of registered students who complete the year in 'good standing' (i.e. survive to the examination within the quota agreed with the HEFC) ensures that universities will seek to recruit students who will fill their quotas and complete the course. It is, therefore, likely that the interests of those students with low qualifications, such as those who entered HE through the group-entry scheme, will be marginalised. Distance learning universities will perhaps, in the future, seek to expand their quotas for vocational and post-graduate students where the success rate as measured in course completions is more easily achieved.

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A conceptual framework for understanding the institutional dynamics involved in a university's response to an allegation of racism

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Our adult students face some important boundaries drawn along lines of race, class, gender, and other human rights categories. For centuries, the university evolved under the assumption that only white, able-bodied, apparently heterosexual men from the comfortable classes had a place in higher education. During the past century, once-excluded people are challenging the boundaries of academe. Once inside, however, they find a complex set of interlocking systems, assumptions, principles, and practices that still exclude them.

Like Raymond Williams, I have spent the past ten years of my working life in the 'borderland' between a major Canadian university and marginalised communities. My work is primarily off-campus, non-credit, adult education programming. Its success depends on the trust I have built up with the communities that form my constituency. Because of this trust, I am often called upon to support individuals from excluded communities who decide to pursue their dreams on campus.

Over the years I have observed the patterns of interaction between students from excluded groups and the University. All too often, they are forced to choose between swallowing the frustration of exclusion, or taking the risk of speaking up. Sometimes they speak up alone, and their comments are worked out, for better or worse, between themselves and their professors. Sometimes, however, as the numbers of non-traditional students in a given area increase, they gain a 'critical mass' and can make their voices heard on an institutional level. Those who hold power in the university then face a choice: work toward institutional change at a deeper level, or label those who speak up as 'troublemakers' who must be 'dealt with'. I want to understand the factors that make university decision-makers react one way or the other.

Origins of this study

Two years ago, I experienced a particularly painful conflict on my own campus when a group of four students challenged the racism they experienced in the University, and began to organise toward change. One was African-Nova Scotian, one a recent immigrant, and two were Native. All were low-income and female. They were labelled 'troublemakers,' and in spite of their good records as students, they were accused of trying to cover up mediocre performance. One never did finish her degree, one finished late, and one ended up with a lawyer's fee she had great difficulty paying in order to successfully defend herself against a disciplinary action. The only Native faculty member in the school supported the four students in their organising efforts, and after a year of severe harassment by the administration, lost her job. Most of university administrators involved were also female, making it somewhat easier to isolate race as an equity factor.

Just before this series of events came about, I had published a reflection on oppression and privilege, where I examined the position of individuals who hold privilege in certain situations because of historical discrimination (Bishop 1994). I quickly realised that my understanding of oppression/ privilege relations among individuals was not enough to explain the institutional response I witnessed.

I searched the literature for others who have written about similar institutional situations, and found very little, most of it about gender rather than race.[1] At that point I decided to devote my Masters thesis to an exploratory-descriptive qualitative study of the situation I experienced. Its purpose is to better understand the institutional dynamics involved in a university's reaction to allegations of racism, particularly the assumptions and perceptions of those who hold the power and responsibility to make decisions.

Mapping the story

The first step in the study was to gather the stories the five central players. I interviewed them, and wrote a joint account from their perspective. They are currently editing their portions of the story, and their changes will be included in a final version. Meanwhile, I began working with the literature and the draft account to develop a conceptual framework for the study.

First I 'mapped' the story, using time as the horizontal scale, and the hierarchical levels of the University as the vertical scale. A pattern quickly emerged. Over time the five key players made a series of appeals for support, moving upward through the Director, Deans, and Vice Presidents, ending finally at the level of the President. The appeals came first from the students, later from the faculty member as well.

There were four supportive responses, one to the faculty member, and three to the students. There were nine responses that could be labelled 'blaming' or 'punishing.' One of these was directed at the students, and one at the University's Employment Equity Officer, the source of two of the supportive responses. The other seven were aimed at the Native faculty member.

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[1] The literature I did find analysing instances of response to allegations of racism in a university setting include: Bankier 1996, Graveline 1996, hooks 1994, Prentice 1996, Sabattis 1996, Rau 1995, Williams 1991.

It was very interesting to me that although the students originally made the allegations, they garnered most of the support, while the faculty member who supported them received most of the 'blaming' responses. Some remarks from other faculty in the school demonstrated how responsibility for the whole situation was placed on the one Native faculty member; for example: 'She coerced the students into saying those things', and 'We never had trouble with the Black and Native students before she came here.'

The scapegoat

At this point I began to explore the concept of 'scapegoat.' The scapegoat first appears in the Bible:

> He shall bring forward the live goat. He shall lay both his hands on his head and confess over it all the iniquities of the Israelites and all their acts of rebellion, that is all their sins; he shall lay them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness in charge of a man who is waiting ready. The goal shall carry all their iniquities upon itself into some barren waste and the man shall let it go, there in the wilderness. (Joint Committee on the New Translation of the Bible 1970, Leviticus 16:20-22)

In other words, collective 'sins' are projected on to the goat, and the goat carries them away, 'into the wilderness.' The image became even more powerful in light of the fact that the Native faculty member was forced to leave over this situation.

In the literature on this topic, there is a major difference of opinion about the scapegoat's role. Some consider the scapegoat a necessary outlet for the natural violence in human society.[2] Others do not see human violence as natural, and understand the role of the scapegoat to be one of taking the blame for structural injustices, thus leaving them invisible and intact.[3] I am one of those who do not believe that violence is inherent in human nature, and therefore I tend to fall into the latter camp.

I have been comparing the literature on scapegoats with the literature on tokens, that is, those who are the only one, or one of two or three of their kind in an organisation.[4] I am coming to the conclusion that tokens make ideal scapegoats because they are both visible and vulnerable, in a setting where the historical injustice opposing them is invisible and deeply rooted.

The context of institutional power-holders' decisions and actions

I had re-defined the 'blaming, punishing' responses I witnessed as scapegoating, and entered a process of reflection on the role scapegoating plays in preventing an organisation from achieving more just relationships. At that point, I turned my attention back to my original quest: to understand the institutional dynamics involved in a university's response to an allegation of racism. How do those who carry the power and responsibility for decision-making in the university make the choice between change or preservation of the status quo? I needed to define concepts that would help me understand the position in which institutional power-holders find themselves when they make such a decision. With the help of a graphic artist, I developed a picture of the forces acting on a decision-maker in a situation such as this. It is reproduced as the illustration in this article.

The diagram shows an institutional power-holder faced with a person from a group traditionally excluded by the institution. Sometimes in the first instance the decision-maker is called in to resolve a conflict between people of relatively equal power, except for the equity factor. In other situations, the person from the traditionally-excluded group is directly challenging the power-holder. For simplicity's sake, the drawing shows the latter situation. The pressures on the decision-maker are the same in either case.

At the first level, the conflict itself, the equity factor is rarely completely clear. It is usually complicated by personality factors, cultural factors, the complex interweaving of oppressions experienced by both parties, personal and collective past histories, and the compounded effects of oppression. For example, the person from the traditionally-excluded group may have low self-confidence from internalised oppression when faced with a person from the dominant group, or academic skills affected by an earlier inferior educational experience. Both players come to the conflict with their own dreams and aspirations, and behind that, their own experiences of injury and support from family, community, and their unique interweaving of oppression and privilege. The institutional power-holder will almost always have more experience of privilege than the person from the traditionally excluded group; he or she may have an equally harrowing experience of oppression, but rarely in the present.

The decision-maker, however, holds far more than a personal history and motivation, He or she also holds a role, with certain power and responsibilities on behalf of the institution. Shown surrounding the two initial players, this body brings to the picture its

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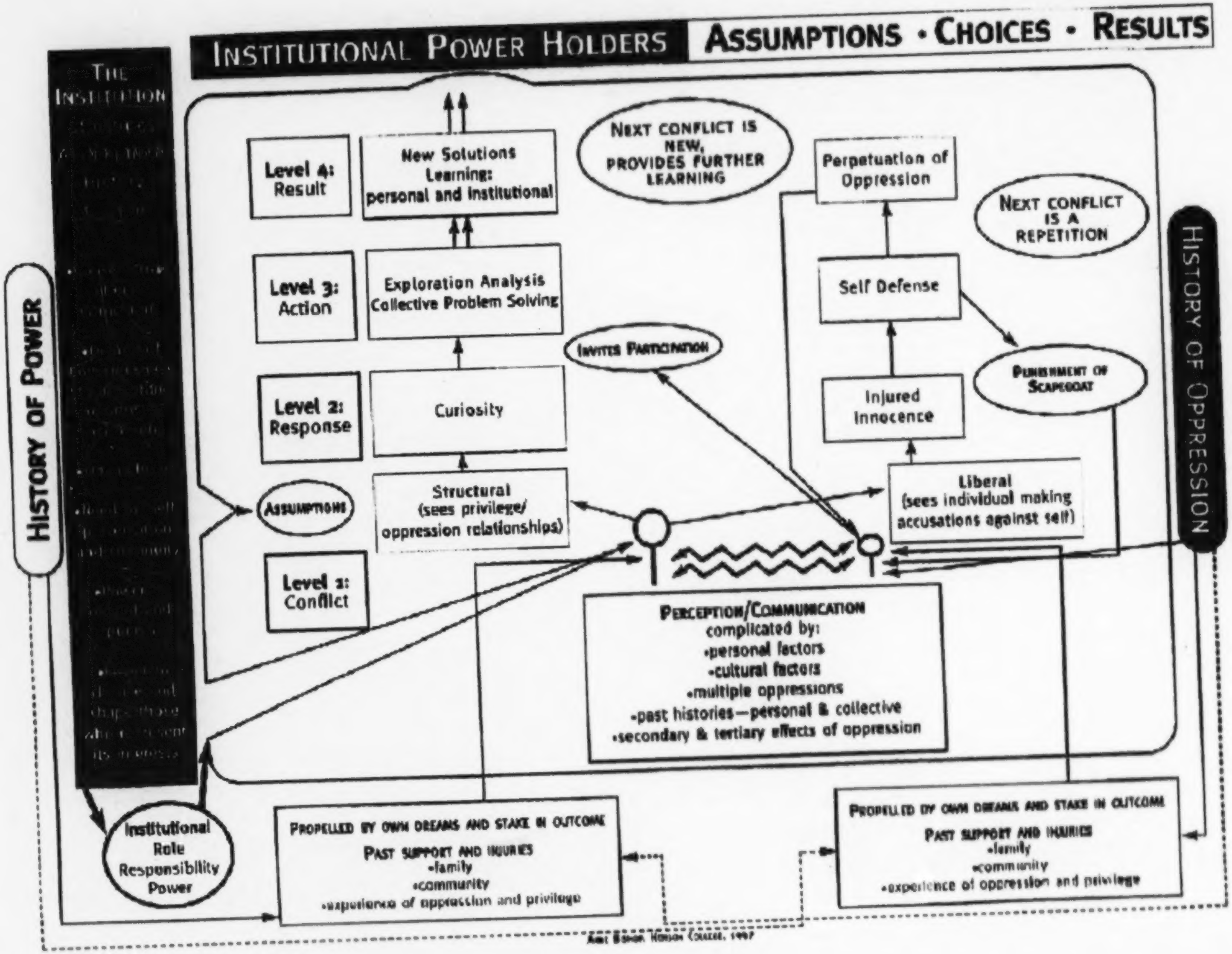
[2] Leading this group is Réné Girard (1977)

[3] Leading this group is Walter Wink (1992)

[4] The original classic on tokenism is Kanter, R. M. (1977)

Diagram 1 Institutional Power Holders


INSTITUTIONAL POWER HOLDERS
ASSUMPTIONS • CHOICES • RESULTS
THE INSTITUTION
HISTORY OF POWER
HISTORY OF OPPRESSION
Level 4: Result
New Solutions Learning: personal and institutional
Level 3: Action
Exploration Analysis Collective Problem Solving
Level 2: Response
Curiosity
Assumptions
Structural (sees privilege/ oppression relationships)
Level 1: Conflict
NEXT CONFLICT IS NEW, PROVIDES FURTHER LEARNING
Invites Participation
Perpetuation of Oppression
NEXT CONFLICT IS A REPETITION
Self Defense
Punishment of Scapegoat
Injured Innocence
Liberal (sees individual making accusations against self)
PERCEPTION/COMMUNICATION complicated by:
•personal factors
•cultural factors
•multiple oppressions
•past histories—personal & collective
•secondary & tertiary effects of oppression
Institutional Role Responsibility Power
PROPELLED BY OWN DREAMS AND STAKE IN OUTCOME
PAST SUPPORT AND INJURIES
•family
•community
•experience of oppression and privilege
PROPELLED BY OWN DREAMS AND STAKE IN OUTCOME
PAST SUPPORT AND INJURIES
•family
•community
•experience of oppression and privilege
Ami Bishop, Hodson College, 1997

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history, structures, assumptions, culture, and need for self-preservation. Its culture may come from a structural view of the world, either conservative or progressive (although the latter is very rare in institutions), or an individualistic or liberal view of the world. If it has a structural view of the world, it may be aware of the discriminatory assumptions encoded in its history and structures. If it has an individualistic view of the world, its assumptions, particularly the discriminatory ones, are more likely unconscious, even actively denied. The institution's culture may have a tradition of being open or closed. The institution has great power to punish and reward those within it, and can both choose and shape those who play its designated roles and represent its interests. Its power often comes from its role as a gateway to certain extremely important conditions of life, for example well-paid, respected jobs and professions.

Behind the power of the institution is a history of power generally, for those who hold, or have held, power in the society, have shaped its institutions to perform certain functions in their interest. This history of power also has a role to play in the personal history of the institutional power-holder, and possibly to a less extent, on a smaller stage, the personal history of the excluded person as well.

The person from the traditionally-excluded group also brings to the picture a history, but this time of oppression. It plays a huge role in his or her position in the institution and personal history. As said above, it plays a role, although usually lesser in the present, in the personal history of the institutional power-holder as well.

Faced with the conflict at Level 1, the institutional power-holder must make a decision. Here he or she faces a personal choice, although it is severely limited by the reward and punishment powers of the institution. The choice is informed by the person's own assumptions, which come from his or her world-view. This world view can be structural, or individualistic.

The assumptions associated with a structural world-view are:

- history is always with us;
- an institution is a structural entity that functions to reinforce its own status quo, particularly its traditional power relationships;
- all institutions and individuals in a discriminatory society reflect that discrimination;
- intentions don't count, only results;
- conflict is the means to growth and is therefore desirable;
- privilege is invisible, therefore, the word of those who experience a certain form of oppression are given more weight.

The assumptions associated with an individualistic, or liberal world-view are:

- you can always make a fresh start;
- an institution is made up of the individuals in it;
- the institution and the people in it are basically fair-minded and free of discrimination;
- good intentions are enough;
- comfort is important; therefore, conflict is undesirable;
- all voices are equal.

With assumptions from a structural world view, an institutional decision-maker will see the situation as a systemic one, a result of the oppression and privilege configuring the situation. The allegations will not be taken personally, nor will conflict itself be seen as a negative thing, but as an indication of where the systems need change. There will also be an understanding that discrimination is a matter of effect, not intention.

Based on structural assumptions, the institutional power-holder will believe the word of the traditionally-excluded person, react with curiosity, and proceed to explore the situation, analyse it, and engage in collective problem-solving, involving all parties. At Level 4, 'Results,' this process will lead to new solutions, and learning at both the personal and institutional levels. The traditionally-excluded group will continue to be included, and eventually the process will result in changes to the institution. This process can, however, be stopped at a higher rung of the hierarchy by a decision-maker with more individualistic assumptions. In that case, the lower-level decision maker risks institutional punishment along with the traditionally-excluded person. The fear of this punishment alone is sometimes enough to prevent a lower-level decision-maker from supporting institutional change, even if he or she believes it is the right course of action.

With assumptions from an individualistic, or liberal, world view, the decision-maker will not see the histories of power and oppression working in the situation, and may not even recognise or admit his or her own power-base in the institution. There will be no distinction between intention and effect, and conflict will be seen as a negative thing in itself. The institutional power-holder will perceive the situation as an unjustified personal attack, especially if he or she has played any role in admitting the traditionally-excluded person into the institution in the first place.

The result of these assumptions will be a reaction of injured innocence and fear, leading to self-defence. The action taken will usually be scapegoating. This distracts all attention from the systemic conditions that gave rise to the conflict in the first place, and the result is the perpetuation of oppression in the institution. Nothing changes at the systemic level, and the pressures begin, almost immediately, to build toward a repeat of the same process with different individuals further down the road. The pattern of action and reaction becomes a cycle, with a scapegoat (or more than one) ejected on each round, and the institution is preserved in its current form.

Two patterns of institutional response to equity conflict

Following this analysis of the forces surrounding an individual decision-maker faced with an equity conflict, I went on to further define the two patterns of institutional response that result from the two courses of action available to the institutional power-holders. One results from the individualistic, or liberal, world-view; the other from the structural one.

In the individualist, or liberal model, those traditionally excluded are invited into the institution with a minimum of critical or informed policy development. There is a 'honeymoon' period when everyone is pleased with the arrangement, and any discontent that the newcomers feel is not expressed. As time goes on, however, the situation becomes less bearable, the newcomers become more familiar with the ways of the institution, and their numbers increase to a critical mass. At this point, they express their discontent. The institution represses the impending conflict as long as it can. When it finally cannot be contained any longer, it explodes and becomes obvious.

At this point, the institution scapegoats whoever appears not to fit. This may be identified as the newcomers, or it may be a member of the more established group whose reaction to the newcomers goes beyond liberal sensibilities. Existing policies and procedures are used to try and push the scapegoat out of the institution. If the scapegoat is a traditional 'insider', other among their group can direct their considerable institutional power against the institution and the traditionally-excluded group, escalating the conflict into a general backlash against the newcomers. The most common end result is for the current group of newcomers to leave. In their absence, there is considerable pressure to invite new members of their group in, to prove that the institution is not discriminatory. This initiates the cycle all over again.

The structural model can be portrayed as a spiral. There is a much longer period here between the initiation of the idea and the entry of members of traditionally excluded group into the institution. This time is spent developing comprehensive, informed policies and procedures through a process designed to achieve as much consensus as possible.

When the newcomers arrive, there is still a 'honeymoon' period, but when the conflicts begin, the reaction is quite different from that of the liberal model. Conflict is not seen as negative in this model, but as the source of learning. There are also the procedures defined in the policy for healthy processing of conflict as it arises. This means that, unless there is extreme and continuous unacceptable behaviour from someone, no one has to leave. The process of conflict and learning becomes continuous, with occasional evaluations and adjustment of the policy framework. With each conflict, the institution itself changes, so that the pattern becomes a spiral rather than a circle.

Conclusion

I am currently getting feedback on this set of concepts, and will develop them further according to the comments I receive. When they are in final form, they will provide a framework for the data-gathering and analysis I hope to carry out with those who held positions of institutional during the events of two years ago.

I hope the final result will be some clear guidelines to improve the way our universities respond to those women, visible minority and aboriginal people, gay and lesbian people, and people with disabilities who try to point out the injustice they experience in our institutions of higher learning. The eventual result, I hope, will be better access to post-secondary learning for those who have been traditionally excluded.

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When Taipan Tung meets Paulo Freire: contradiction and crisis in post-colonial Hong Kong adult education

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Tung Chee Hwa, Beijing's 'chief executive', will rule Hong Kong in a manner reminiscent of the British governor. Hand-picked by Beijing, he will report to authorities in a distant capital and, despite protestations to the contrary and an affable nature, will not overly involve ordinary folks in much decision-making. Tung is an exceedingly wealthy tycoon. Prior to the hand-over, Tung was too preoccupied to travel. Hence it was Martin Lee (Leader of the Hong Kong Democratic Party) who called on President Clinton of the USA or Prime Minister Chretien of Canada. In the struggle for public opinion in North America Lee (1996) scored well in the western press (Democracy Leade. Wins U.S. Support, *Vancouver Sun*, April 14, 1997, A7; Tung Squirms Over Civil Liberties, Cancels Visit to Washington, *Vancouver Sun*, 18 April, 1997, A12). In contrast, Paulo Freire is a man of modest means and not in the best of health[1]. Although Tung should talk to Freire, the chances of them sharing noodles are not good.

Bootleg translations of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* circulate in China, and activists in Hong Kong know the meaning of 'dialogue' and 'conscientization.' By giving police expanded powers to deal with protests and by employing other measures to combat unnamed 'external forces' (read: Taiwan) and by restricting the activities of foreign educators (such as the International Council For Adult Education or Amnesty International) Taipan Tung will soon collide with the 'Freirean' tradition. A significant date will be June 4, 1998 — the anniversary of the Tiananmen incident. How Tung deals with any deviation from functionalist orthodoxy in education or anything else will speak volumes about the dependability of 'one country, two systems' and his ability to 'educate' authorities in Beijing about 'realities' in Hong Kong (DeGolyer 1993; McMillen and DeGolyer 1993; Jayawickrama 1993).

Hong Kong is a stunning jewel perched atop Victoria Harbour. In the streets, elegant women dodge pails filled with eels, large stacks of cabbage, coffin makers, street dentists, fortune tellers and sex advisers. Children in uniforms amble to schools perched in the most unlikely places. Besuited cell-phone toting businessmen hurry from deal to deal and it is only on important holidays that the place pauses for air. Part of Hong Kong's vitality is the result of adult education. Adult educators in Hong Kong are busy people, there is no shortage of interest in their programmes and, with the restructuring of tertiary and higher education, there are now broadened opportunities for participation at all levels. However, 1997 has brought new challenges, notably the arrival of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), best known for their brutality in Tiananmen Square, as well as obligations to an impoverished and vastly populated mother-land. Because of coverage given to affluence in coastal cities (for example, Shanghai, Guangzhou) it is easy to overlook the fact that China is still a feudal and deeply impoverished country with deep and potentially explosive rural/urban differences.

An increasing number of people with knowledge of living standards in the west are not willing to wait until today's better educated children grow up and occupy leadership positions. Adult education is a pressing need, for all the kinds of reasons present in the west but also because of the lost generation — the hundreds of millions of people locked out of schools and denied formal education during the tumult of the cultural revolution (1966-1976). A 14-year-old Chinese who would otherwise have been in school in 1970 is now 41 years of age and thus a prime candidate for adult education.

All education is political and the awesome potential of the 'subversion' law in Hong Kong has created problems for adult education nested in emancipatory traditions (Boshier 1997). The key question is — how much will China meddle after 1997? According to the *Far Eastern Economic Review* (December 12 1996, 28) the 'highly educated and worldly cadres in charge of Hong Kong policy have every reason to honour their hands-off pledge' but the same cannot be said for 'lower-level' officials in China who have no idea about the 'one country, two systems' idea'. Roberti (1996) claims the question is irrelevant because although China has stated repeatedly that it 'will give Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy ... every action it has taken has contradicted these words' (1996, 305). Events leading up to the hand-over reinforced this impression.

Hong Kong adults are enthusiastic learners and habitually camp outside offices to be first in line to get an application form for some new programme (e.g. open learning). They also endure cramped classrooms, didactic teaching styles and authoritarianism. But, despite its disadvantages, there is a vibrant system of adult education in Hong Kong which occurs in an array of settings (Holford, 1994). However, entrepreneurial proclivities of its operators leave little time for studying adult education and, at the end of the year, what counts is how profits compare to those of competitors up the hill or on the other side of the harbour.

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[1] This paper was submitted for publication prior to the death of Paulo Freire on 1 May 1997

Adult education occurs throughout society, most of it in 'non-educational' agencies — such as factories, prisons, hospitals or churches. It is a formidable task to map such a dispersed field. In one attempt Man (1988) assembled a *Directory of Adult Education in Hong Kong*. This directory identified providers, agencies and settings that in western countries would normally be categorized under Schroeder's (1970) or Darkenwald and Merriam's (1982) schemas. Holford, Gardner and Ng (1995) used 'source of funds' as the organising variable in a classificatory schema that distinguished four kinds of adult education agencies — degree-granting (e.g. universities, Open Learning Institute), other government funded agencies (e.g. Technical Institutes), voluntary 'charitable' and other non-profit agencies (e.g. Caritas), private companies. It is exceedingly difficult to identify every instance of adult education in Hong Kong but, following Darkenwald and Merriam (1982), these are the broad outlines of the field.

Typology of agencies

I. Independent adult education organisations

Community-based agencies

Community-based organisations that exist primarily for the purpose of providing adult education include social service agencies like the Association for the Advancement of Feminism, the Family Planning Association, Anti-Discrimination Female Indigenous Residents' Committee, Women 30 Action Group, Red Cross, YMCA, Society for Rehabilitation, the Mental Health Association, the Norwegian Missionary Society, Project Concern, Society for the Aid and Rehabilitation of Drug Abusers, St. John's Ambulance Association and hundreds of others.

Proprietary schools

Hong Kong is a hotbed of proprietary (i.e. private enterprise, for profit) schools offering courses on cooking, computers, and thousands of other topics. Visitors can still see evidence of the proprietary schools of the past (e.g., Pitman's typing and secretarial school). These days there are a large number of proprietary schools that 'stand alone' or are associated with a business (for example, a sewing school located in a fabric store). Some are part of international networks. Nearly all seem to be run by energetic entrepreneurs who endure high rents, overcrowded facilities and a clientele that has little spare time and wants a certificate or diploma in a hurry.

Open learning operations

Foreigners might wonder why six million people living cheek by jowl in a small place with an impressive mass transit system would be interested in distance education. But there is a ready market and, as a consequence, a large number of foreign operators offering distance education courses. By 1989 it was time for the government to join the fray and an Open Learning Institute was created. The planners, mostly educators who work in formal 'face-to-face' settings, ensured that the Hong Kong Open Learning Institute would pose no threat to established universities or tertiary institutes (Report 1984; Report 1989). However, by 1997, the OLI was secure in a new HK$220 million 13-storey building on Good Shepherd Street in Ho Man Tin, about 20,000 students (most aged between 22 and 35 years, with 42 percent living in the New Territories) were enrolled in its programmes and it had become a university. Although its future seemed assured it was almost entirely informed by functionalist ideology and a problem in Hong Kong is that ordinary citizens construct open learning in very pejorative terms (Boshier and Pratt 1997).

II. Formal education institutions

Public schools

The Adult Education section of the Education Department provides courses to adults in an Evening Institute, ten adult education and recreation centres and 78 subvented agencies. Courses range from Adult Basic Education (ABE) to leisure or hobby-oriented classes. In secondary schools the government offers courses for adults that prepares them for the Hong Kong Certificate of Education examinations. There is also a network of 'Adult Education and Recreation Centres' and Evening Schools of 'Higher Chinese Studies' wherein adults study Chinese language, classical literature and culture.

Tertiary institutions

Tertiary institutions provide a large array of courses aimed at adults. Much of this might be better characterised as 'youth education for adults' because it is constructed from within an ideology of training, rather than education.

Subvented organisations

There are 600,000 people who do not have enough to eat in Hong Kong and a quarter of the population only have primary school educations (Hong Kong Shares Problems, *Vancouver Sun*, December 13, 1996, A14). Fortunately, churches and other providers made up for some of the deficiencies in the state system and a lot of adult education is organised by social welfare agencies such as the Caritas Adult and Higher Education service, the largest provider of adult education in Hong Kong. Although Caritas is affiliated to the Catholic church it is a general-purpose provider — 95 percent of those served are not Catholic. Agencies like Caritas, the Baptist University and other similar agencies are subvented — meaning they get government money because they do work that in other jurisdictions would fall within the purview of the state. In 1996 there were 78 subvented agencies offering adult education programmes in Hong Kong. Some of these subvented organisations contain adroit and 'critical' practitioners who, in some cases, have arranged the translation and circulation of Freire's works in China.

Universities

There are a large number of foreign universities that offer Hong Kong adults the opportunity to enrol in degree courses. Many of these claim to be doing 'distance education', charge high fees and produce programmes of doubtful quality. In contrast to the foreign operators of earlier times, many new 'educators' are rapacious capitalists. As a result, the Hong Kong government and local academics quite rightly worry about quality (see Holford, Gardner and Ng 1995; Lee and Lam 1993) and 'quality assurance' has become a major preoccupation. Sometimes audacious rip-offs are executed by distance education 'universities' (Students Taught Costly Lesson, *South China Morning Post*, December 15, 1996, 3; Refund Provision Aimed At Weeding Out Cowboys, *South China Morning Post*, December 15, 1996, 3). Some of the foreign universities operating in Hong Kong are not accredited or recognised in their home countries.

The major universities have extra-mural, continuing education or continuing studies divisions. These are large, flourishing and dynamic operations, several offer joint programmes with overseas institutions, all have staff trained in western institutions and, in each case, the Director is imbued by a sense of entrepreneurship. The leading operators are the School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPACE) at the University of Hong Kong where there were over 600,000 registrations for courses between 1956 and 1994 (SPACE 1994) and the Department of Continuing (formerly Extra-mural) Studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Although echoes of the British extra-mural tradition are visible, the driving force is an intense form of entrepreneurship. There is considerable rivalry among the parties and careers have been crushed, friendships destroyed and court actions launched by the temptations and exigencies of the pressure-cooker atmosphere that constructs adult education in the universities.

III. Quasi-educational organisations

Cultural organisations

Hong Kong has been labelled a 'cultural backwater' (Lau 1984) but, according to Morris (1993) theatre and culture had reached the region by 1744. Today, organisations that use adult education in the course of promoting local culture include the Urban Council, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre, the Aberdeen Civic Centre, various Community Arts Centres, the Repertory theatre, the Chinese orchestra, the Hong Kong dance company, the Arts Festival, the Fringe Festival, the Festival of Asian Arts, the International Film Festival, the International Theatrical Carnival, various museums, the zoo, the Hong Kong Philharmonic orchestra, theatre, ballet and dance companies, the Antiquities and Monuments office and many others.

Community organisations

Community groups that provide adult education as one of a number of services to the public include the Friends of the Earth (environmental activists), the Anti-Reclamation Society, numerous sports clubs, AIDS activist organisations and pressure groups such as the Democratic Party. There are also numerous clan associations — mutual societies that provide aid to members. In the run-up to 1997 more than a third of 54,000 Chinese immigrants arriving in Hong Kong each year were unable to speak either Cantonese or English and clan associations were conducting courses and providing tutors for them (Hong Kong Shares Problems, *Vancouver Sun*, December 13, 1996, p. A14).

Business and industry

Significantly, the British authorities handed over Hong Kong under the soaring roof of the just-finished Trade and Convention Centre, which juts into the harbour at Wanchai (on yet another harbour reclamation). The British hongs (for example, Jardine Matheson) and Chinese capitalists in Hong Kong have all made lavish use of adult education. For example, when Shanghai's cotton spinners fled to Hong Kong they brought very positive attitudes to technical training and, according to Wong 'each mill organised their own classes to instruct technicians' (1988, 66). These days adult education orchestrated by business and industry in Hong Kong includes a vast array of internal staff training programmes — whether in airlines, shipping, finance, information technologies — as well as public education programmes aimed at government and each other.

Trade unions

In 1987 there were 403 employees' unions with 371,000 members, three employers' associations with 3000 members and 15 'mixed' organisations with 23,000 members (Hong Kong, 1987). The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions had 71 affiliated unions with about 167,000 members. Many of these unions provide public education (concerning issues that pertain to working men and women) as well as programmes for their members.

IV. Government agencies

Just about every government department is involved in some form of adult education. A Vocational Training Council was established in 1982 and has a large complex in Kowloon Bay. Under the VTC are numerous training boards and general committees covering different economic sectors — such as accounting, automobile repair, building construction, journalism, printing and so on. There is, for example, a Seamen's Training Centre for seafarers, a

Management Development Centre, Clothing Industry and Construction Industry and similar 'training authorities'.

Other government or statutory agencies that provide adult education — to the general public, their own employees, or both — include the Independent Commission Against Corruption, the Consumer Council, the Urban Council, Radio and Television Hong Kong, the Royal Observatory, the Productivity Council, the Trade Development Council, the Labour Department, the Agriculture and Fisheries Department, the Medical and Health Department, the Social Welfare Department, the Housing Authority, the Marine Department, the Transport Department, the Civil Aviation Department, the Hong Kong Tourist Association. The Hong Kong Government Information Services links people with the government and is responsible for very high quality publications including the annual yearbook and news digests. It also carries out government publicity campaigns to do with narcotics, crime prevention, smoking, industrial safety, fire prevention, inclusion of disabled people, 'Keep Hong Kong Clean', family life, landslides, garbage disposal, water conservation, HIV/AIDS, and similar matters.

Disciplined services

In 1987 the Fire department answered 18,808 fire calls, 11,000 'special' calls and 365,574 ambulance calls (Hong Kong, 1987). The Police, Corrections and Fire Departments all have internal staff training schemes but provide public education as well. Some of the public education campaigns make creative use of television and other media. Hong Kong has been the scene of major fires in squatter areas and is periodically raked by typhoons that cause floods and landslides. In crowded older buildings fire prevention is a major concern, particularly in the aftermath of the disastrous Garley Building fire on Nathan Rd, Yaumati of November 20 1996 in which 40 people were trapped and lost their lives through smoke inhalation or jumping into the street below. It will be interesting to see how the PLA presence influences education and training in the disciplined services.

Prisons

The Correctional Services Department, in collaboration with the Education Department, runs Adult Basic Education and Vocational courses for inmates in Hong Kong prisons and other correctional facilities.

Why Tung should talk to Freire

Various social welfare agencies, community educators, democracy and environmental activists practise forms of adult education informed by a critical or Habermasian perspective. Hong Kong has now rejoined China which is a Maoist/Marxist state, despite the embrace of the 'free market'. Yet adult educators espousing a critical, neo-Marxist or Marxist ideology are not welcome in the Hong Kong SAR or on the mainland. A criticalist approach to education is incongruent with the aspirations of the present privileged regime in Hong Kong and deeply unsettling to China's leaders who fear 'turmoil' (Boshier 1997; Pye 1985; Pye 1992). Educators with links to foreign agencies (such as Amnesty International, Friends of the Earth) are particularly vulnerable. Yet in China there is a considerable interest in the western notion of involving adult learners in the design and management of their educational processes, fascination with open learning and the potential of the new technologies as well as a profound need to secure better and more self-conscious approaches to the training of technologists, financial experts and those in the hospitality trades.

The fact that Tung will not be taking Freire for noodles in Temple Street or Causeway Bay is regrettable, because they need to talk. Illiteracy will be a pressing issue in post-colonial Hong Kong because of an influx of low-skilled labourers from the mainland. This will occur at the same time as Hong Kong's own unskilled workers are jettisoned from their jobs as factories move north to take advantage of cheaper labour and materials on the mainland. Already, between 1980 and 1995 the manufacturing workforce in Hong Kong fell from 860,000 to 380,000. Moreover, Hong Kong workers losing their jobs do not have the skills or credentials needed to secure employment in the emerging economy — finance, high technology, engineering, architecture, China trade. Hong Kong adult educators will be expected to help them and contribute to mainland literacy campaigns. The last campaign was launched in 1988, when more than a fifth of China's population was illiterate — which means that one in four illiterates in the world is Chinese (Educators Declare War On Illiteracy in China, *China Daily*, November 4 1988, 1). At that time there were more than 72 million illiterate people in China aged between 14 and 40 years. At the very time when ABE providers like Caritas will need to mount many additional programmes Article 23 of the Basic Law will 'chill out' the possibility of providing participatory subjectively-derived ABE programmes informed by Freire's or other neo-marxist perspectives. Hence, the current tendency to misuse 'chalk and talk' will be deepened.

Years ago, naval ratings at the signal station hoisted flags to direct Her Majesty's ships entering and leaving harbour. Now, what happens to adult education and it is more critical and inspired practitioners will also constitute a sentinel. The notion of 'one country, two systems' will be measured by the extent to which people can practise a marxian adult education informed by a conflict perspective focused on the oppressive nature of social structures (radical structuralism) or the capacity of people for praxis — reflection followed by action (radical humanism) (Boshier 1994). A disturbing indication of what might lie ahead occurred when in 1994 when the Hong Kong Director of Education approved the censoring of a paragraph in a new Chinese textbook that mentioned June 4, 1989 and Tiananmen Square (Lee and Bray 1995; Sweeting 1997). But, compared to adult education, schooling is more easily corralled. Adult education occurs in factories, places or work, churches, community centres and, in recent years, at the end of an internet connection. If it is suppressed in one place it pops up in another. The adult urge to learn is indomitable, particularly in Hong Kong, and adult education enjoys a close proximity to people at the grassroots. Another enormous contradiction is that participatory and critical adult education — so feared by Beijing authorities — could be a crucial lodestar for China. Adult education is the sinew that supports the four modernisations and a more emancipatory approach to illiteracy is congruent with certain aspects of 'socialist modernisation with Chinese characteristics'. China has every reason, but not necessarily the capacity, to ensure that critical adult education flourishes in Hong Kong. The alternative could involve a descent into chaos, the loss of a million or so foreign passport holders, PLA soldiers pouncing on Martin Lee, Szeto Wah and other 'radicals' with social science or teaching degrees and gloating from competitors (Shanghai and Singapore). As well there is the possible humiliation of being dismissed a polluted and second-rate port in southern China, is awful to contemplate. Hong Kong is one of the most stunning postmodern cities in the world. All friends of China have high hopes for Hong Kong. Yet, it may sound like this dismal prognostication is possible. There is a good reason for this. It is.

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An analysis and critique of transformation theory and adult learning: contributions from consciousness studies

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The theme of the conference, Crossing Borders: Breaking Boundaries, was announced in the call for papers, as '...topical in these postmodern times.' Postmodern thought is currently challenging Modernism, which has been firmly rooted since the Enlightenment Era as a guidepost for both epistemological and ontological frameworks of 'reality,' societal and organisational norms, and professional expectations.

Modernism is the product of the scientific revolution and the societal transformation which transported us from agriculture to industry as society's central project. The inner knowing of theological and philosophical epistemologies took a back seat to outer knowing based on systematic treatment of data which would lead to more valid scientific inquiry and results. Clear boundaries — conceptual, theoretical as well as operational — reflected and contributed to the creation of a value structure in which rules, procedures, and logic governed and truth could be sought.

Postmodernism, among other things, heralds a multiplicity in perspective and voice, a sensitivity to multiple realities. Outer and inner knowing come into balance. Concomitantly, however, is a blurring of traditional boundaries. The blurring of genres in music, architecture, and art are part of the postmodern movement. The term itself is a bit blurred in terms of clarity, but then society is only at the beginning of the dialogue. Out of this postmodern framework has emerged the constructivist movement[1] which has influenced writers within the field of adult education, and which in practical terms is expressed as the movement toward diversity and inclusiveness.

Informed by the literature on adult cognition, however, an understanding of postmodernism may be interpreted differently depending upon one's cognitive development[2]: dichotomous, relativistic, dialectical — to simplify the trajectory. Postmodernism presupposes an ability to think dialectically. One is able to sustain the tension inherent in having multiple perspectives and 'truths' existing simultaneously because one is able to **embrace the greater whole** of which the perspectives are part. Relativistic thinking where one appreciates the contextuality of knowledge is helpful; however, one might still run the risk of becoming trapped in an 'anything goes' mentality. Finally, those whose thinking is primarily guided by an either/or (dichotomous) frame, with little room for grey areas, may have difficulty in entertaining the postmodern movement at all. Alternatively, one may run the risk of interpreting the movement as anti-modern rather than postmodern (the latter includes modernism but views it as a *partial* rendition of reality). Kegan's (1994) concern that adults are being expected to engage in ways of thinking, being, and doing which are beyond the developmental reach of their cognitive frame is a warning well worth heeding. He suggests that those working with adult learners keep mindful of the situation that adults are 'in over their heads' and do their part in developing the "selves" of self-directing learners not expecting everyone to be able to think in what we at this gathering might call a postmodern way.

My position on this dilemma, framed by a Smutsian philosophy[3], is to make explicit the larger framework where possible. I would like to invite you into dialogue, therefore, about the greater context of which the topic of this paper is part. Articulation of this backdrop is an important and integral element of the analysis.

The purpose of this discussion is to report on the author's ongoing inquiry into analysing the 'state of the art' of transformational adult learning 'theory' and evaluating the manner in which the emerging multi-disciplinary field of consciousness studies can broaden and deepen the context for study. Methodologically, a hermeneutic frame was employed[4]. Consciousness studies has 'crossed borders' and 'broken boundaries' as disciplines involved with modern technologies as well as those focusing on ancient wisdom are converging in research and dialogue to lend a renewed understanding of human consciousness. Most adult educators writing on transformational learning seem to agree that a transformation of consciousness is involved. Missing, however, has been a framework to understand and interpret these shifts. Consciousness studies provides such a frame. First an inspection of the larger context in which consciousness studies itself is emerging will be offered as a foundation.

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[1]: Berger and Luckmann (1966) *The social construction of reality* illuminated the interplay between what is perceived/accepted as 'reality' and how it is socially constructed. A more recent treatise (Searle, 1995) takes us into a consideration of *The construction of social reality* which in postmodern terms suggests that there are multiple realities.

[2] This discussion is not meant to imply such a discrete framework for understanding adult cognition.

[3] Smuts, J (1926) *Holism and evolution*. NY: McMillan

[4] The progressive self-reference guided me in following and presenting for examination the movement of my own thought over the years and to open to dialogue my 'biography' as is customary when embracing a hermeneutic framework for one's inquiry.

The larger context

In a much earlier analysis (Boucouvalas, 1980) I reached the tentative discovery that the human species had experienced two major evolutions with an ongoing third emerging. Within the first, the biological evolution, the structure and function of living organisms evolved to increasingly more complex and purportedly **more aware** forms of life. Governed by the principle of survival, and an eat or be eaten way of living, the survivors adapted. This was succeeded by a cultural evolution with the development of civilisation. An elaborate scheme of rules, regulations, customs developed to guide social behaviour. Moving from a 'get food and avoid from becoming food' frame of mind necessitated a new way of seeing and being. Culture requires co-operation, (but sometimes we revert to this earlier way of being). The current shift is toward a consciousness evolution. When I spoke of an evolution of consciousness then it was predicated on writers resonating to similar themes: humanity was undergoing a societal transformation from industry to information as a central project and learning would become the principle business of life. Consciousness was just being resurrected again as a phenomenon worthy of study by a few disciplines and transpersonal psychology was emerging with vigour, only about a decade old. The transpersonal deals with that part of the human phenomenon that gets beyond the personal ego as a sole source of motivation and likewise addresses consciousness as a multi-layered, multi-levelled, multi-state phenomenon. Adult education writers such as Freire and Mezirow were *just* beginning to publish their early works relevant to transformation and adult learning,[5] and a re-balancing between outer and inner ways of knowing was emerging.

Now, increasingly more evidence has accumulated to support and illuminate an evolution of consciousness and more individuals and disciplines are deeming consciousness worthy of study. Not only has the transpersonal orientation moved beyond psychology, but a multi-disciplinary field of consciousness studies has arisen.

Due in part to this larger contextual backdrop, the term transformation or restructuring has emerged: societal transformation, organisational transformation, transformational leaders, along with the 'reinventing' concept have come into common usage. Even a 'transformative research' group was formed in 1988 in Leeds, England (this conference's predecessor). Any theory of transformative adult learning, therefore, must take into consideration these greater frames.

Transformation theory: analysis and critique

Two major theorists have become associated with the concept (at least in North America): Freire and Mezirow. Clark (1993) has added Daloz to her review and analysis. I would add Boyd and Myers (1988) to the significant literature base. Perhaps others from different continents might augment this list. Also, although outside the present scope, many practice-based models are abounding. Due to the popularity of the term, discernment is called for when reviewing the literature. Accordingly, for this paper the concept of transformation refers not merely to a change but to a restructuring.

What is purportedly being (re)structured? What is suggested about the process of transformation (in learning), what is the basis of knowledge claims, what world view seems to guide each writer's position? A very brief consideration of the analysis undertaken on an individual level will be complemented by attention to what they offer collectively.

With the risk of oversimplifying, it seems reasonable to suggest that from each emerges a unique central concept. For Freire it is 'conscientization'; for Mezirow: 'perspective transformation' and the role of critical reflectivity; for Boyd and Myers: transformative education as an expansion of consciousness and the role of discernment; for Daloz: relationship. For all writers transformation in learning involves a process of becoming **more aware**.

For **Freire**, the process involves becoming **more aware** of (a) the forces shaping one's life (political, social, economic, and so forth) (b) one's ability to restructure one's attitude, actions, and possibly one's world. In addition, one's belief system about self and society is being restructured. Discourse and dialogue, self-reflection and action are essential parts of the process. The basis of these knowledge claims rests on decades of working with the poor and illiterate in his native Brazil, his own experience of exile, his lifelong work with the education of adults.

For **Mezirow**, (based on years of working with colleagues, students, practitioners, and self) the process likewise involves discourse, self-reflection, and reflective action, but on one's assumptions. The process involves restructuring one's frame of reference: the 'structures through which we construe meaning ... (that) selectively shape and delimit our ... perception, cognition, and feelings by predisposing our intentions, expectations, and purposes' (Mezirow 1997, 1). In the transformational process the advent of more inclusive and integrative frames of reference have cognitive, emotional, and conative components. Objective reframing involves task-oriented learning, while subjective reframing involves the self-reflective learning which leads to 'perspective transformation' normally precipitated by a 'disorienting dilemma.' A main aim is to assist the learner in developing the abilities necessary to engage in discourse, critical self-reflection on assumptions, and reflective action. This resonates with Kegan's caveat and concern that many adults are 'in over their heads' ill-equipped with these competencies which Mezirow explicitly beseeches us to develop in ourselves as well as in the learners with whom we come into contact.

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[5] Freire's *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, first published in 1968, was translated into English in 1970. Mezirow's incipient articulation of perspective transformation first appeared in 1978.

Both Freire and Mezirow have sustained their share of critics, a tribute to the seriousness with which their works are being considered, albeit outside the scope of this brief paper to review. For example: is Freire really out of touch with 'reality' and the subtle manipulative influences which could impede 'conscientization'? For a fairly comprehensive review of Freire, the man, the theory and his critics see Elias (1994). A review of critiques and rejoinders on and by Mezirow may be found in the North American based *Adult Education Quarterly* (a list is available at the conference and to others upon request). Contrary to many critiques and interpretations of Mezirow, however, his interest is not restricted exclusively to the rational way of knowing, but includes appreciation of many modes including the intuitive which he would like eventually to consider incorporating into his model.

While Mezirow has deliberately chosen *not* to use the term consciousness because of his position that it often interferes with, rather than clarifies understanding, **Boyd and Myers** explicitly refer to transformative education as an 'expansion of consciousness' (beyond ego). Their image of humankind is based on a Jungian perspective which posits the ego as a construct that deals in a rational manner with the external world and an outer way of knowing. Mezirow, they claim, has offered a model which focuses on 'perceptual changes which occur within the individual's ego structure' and 'relationship with the outer world' (p. 246). Conversely their approach purportedly helps individuals develop 'a readiness to venture into their inner life and (enter) a dialogue between the ego and other psychic structures of the Self.' Discernment 'enables the person to become increasingly sensitive to the unique and intimate constellation of extra rational evidence which, from within the person, calls for attention and response' and 'leads to wholeness,' but the 'ego is to be silent in order to listen' (p. 276). The world view which guides their approach is explicitly articulated as psycho-spiritual in nature rather than purely cognitive in character. Akin to Mezirow's disorienting dilemma, a disruption of order leads to a grieving process where an individual is first receptive to the inner voices, recognises one's inner story and history where distortions of perceptions and the like are acknowledged, and finally as a result of open dialogue with the extra rational message, grieves the loss of one's former way of seeing and being, lets go in order to embrace the new meaning based on expanded consciousness of self. 'Spiritual power' they emphasise contributes 'more to knowing than reasoning alone' (p. 282). Boyd and Myers call upon adult educators to assist learners in this process by cultivating themselves, as facilitators with 'seasoned guidance' and 'compassionate criticism'.

While Mezirow has acknowledged Boyd and Myers' approach as a valid but different pathway, I find it curious that very few people have referenced or acknowledged contributions of Boyd and Myers or that Mezirow has not responded at least in published form to their analysis. Perhaps this evidences a capacity to think dialectically and to allow differing perspectives to exist simultaneously as a part of the larger whole involved in the balance between outer and inner knowing in the development of a more comprehensive theory of transformative in adult learning?

Finally, for **Daloz** the process pivots on a catalytic relationship which lead to a **deepening awareness**. The theme is apparent in his earlier work which focuses on the relationship between an adult learner/mentee and a mentor (1986) and his more recent research (Daloz and others 1996) which concentrates on an individual's relationship with a larger cause. While the other writers accentuate more the development of autonomous aspects of self as an agent vis-à-vis the social, Daloz focuses more on consciousness of connectedness. To me this lucidly speaks to autonomy's complement — homomony — a concept introduced to the adult education community in an earlier paper (Boucouvalas 1988). Homonomy refers to the meaning derived in life by feeling and being parts of greater wholes. Their work attempts to understand a Self grown large enough to identify with and embrace more than the personal ego. While Boyd and Myers suggest inner dialogue as a pathway to expand *internal* consciousness from the personal to the collective, the individuals in Daloz's research have externalised this awareness as a way of being in the world. Because study was made of individuals already living in this manner, less is known about the process except in retrospective reflections (a fertile territory for further research). That which is being restructured in transformational language, then, is the very ground of self which is motivated by a commitment to the common good, a hallmark of the Transpersonal Self.

Across the writers, autonomous and homonomous balance is evident. Transformation involves restructured and deepened awareness such that one's epistemological or ontological orientation has modified: for Freire: awareness of 'oppression' and capacity to address the ramifications for the benefit of individuals and society; for Mezirow: awareness of one's frame of reference and assumptions and the necessity to bring them to 'ordinary' awareness for reflection and analysis; for Boyd and Myers: awareness of the structure of inner space and the importance of grieving and 'letting go' in order to embrace a more expanded sense of self; for Daloz: awareness of a larger sense of self becomes operationalised as one becomes committed to and acts for the 'common good'.

Writings consistently refer to a transformation of consciousness, but what does that mean?. It seems timely to consider points which the field of consciousness studies can offer. A long term goal would be to develop an action and research agenda. The following ponderings provide a start in that direction. If we can acknowledge that as a field we are only addressing a small portion of consciousness then we can work together from there.

Contributions from consciousness studies

David Chalmers, professor of philosophy at University of California has coined the now oft-quoted assertion about the 'easy problems' and the 'hard problems' in the study of consciousness. The easy problems deal with understanding neural structure, cognitive functioning and the like. Conversely, the hard problem is the mystery of how any form of neural activity can give rise to phenomenal **experience** of consciousness. Frequently recurring throughout the literature and emerging at consciousness conferences is consensus on the inadequacy of current scientific tools alone to help, and a questioning of whether the current scientific paradigm provides an adequate lens. In fact the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* (JCS), 1994, clearly communicated that 'future work on consciousness must follow a direction which brings scientific and self-reflective practices together' (p. 15). It becomes apparent that the field of adult education is immersed in the 'hard problem' of consciousness. We might embrace the dual challenge, then, of keeping abreast of advances and applying them to our theory building and reciprocally determine how research and practice internal to our field can contribute externally to the larger venture.

Consciousness studies has wide applicability in providing a broader context for theory building in adult learning per se which I have begun to articulate (Boucouvalas 1993, 1995a) and continue to explore. Not all learning, however, is transformative. Conversely, not all consciousness literature deals with transformations. As recognised by Hunt (1995), 'transpersonal psychology has gradually crystallised as the discipline involved in the study of the transformations of consciousness' (p. 3). As demonstrated elsewhere, however, (Boucouvalas 1995b), the transpersonal perspective is no longer limited to the discipline of psychology, but cuts across many disciplines. The restructuring of the *Australian Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* in recent years to the *International Journal of Transpersonal Studies* indicated the broadening of the territory.

Transformations of consciousness range from information and insights that restructure our awareness to more profound restructuring that produces a more evolved creature. Repeatedly discussed are the **latent transformative capacities inherent in the human species.** We are still in process.

Given that some experiences and knowledge are not available to ordinary waking awareness, what would transformational learning theory be like if we were to go into another level or state to reflect as an alternative to bringing the information into ordinary awareness? Viewed through a postmodern lens, our ordinary state is culturally constructed. Entering another state enables us to temporarily restructure consciousness and develop latent potentials outside the cultural norm. Moreover, given the concept of state specificity of knowledge, what one understands in one state may not come to awareness in another or may be difficult to put into language. Also, voluminous research suggests that much transformative learning may take place at a less than conscious level of awareness. The adage of 'sleep on it' refers to the phenomenon whereby the material which has been pondered and reflected upon will continue to process at a space beyond conscious awareness where learning and synthesis are taking place. Consider also, sudden transformative events such as religious conversion and near death experiences. These are all missing from our discussions of transformation theory.

Consciousness is more than thinking. We can differentiate between **reflective thinking**, which the writings in our field have focused on almost exclusively, and **contemplative reflection**: between reflecting on the **contents of consciousness** (including assumptions, frames, worldviews) and the **fundamental structures of consciousness** which hold the content. Often, the structures are beyond our ordinary awareness, but if one were to directly experience the falling off of old structures and emergence of new more inclusive, one would best turn to the theory and practice of meditation. Two most readable accounts which represent a synthesis of multiple traditions and address the external validity and cross-cultural universality of these shifts are those of Brown, and Brown and Engler.[6] These studies move beyond a discussion of levels and states (temporary glimpses) to more pervasive developmental shifts in consciousness which involve movement to a more evolved and complex being. Predictable cognitive, perceptual, and affective 'transformations' unfold in a 'systematic deconstruction of the structures of ordinary consciousness'. This literature moves well beyond the sensate renditions of meditation abounding in the popular press. Even if this territory lies outside one's experience even a cognitive read and understanding will influence the way in which we approach transformational adult learning in theory and practice. In sum, the electromagnetic spectrum was to this century as the spectrum of human consciousness will be to our next millennium. Our field can benefit and be benefited by this movement, to deepen and broaden the context for theory building, and in a complementary manner contribute to working on the 'hard' problem of consciousness, the experience of awareness. How will we respond to these challenges?

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[6] Both studies appear in Wilber and others (1986).

Research is adult learning: questioning the boundaries

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Research is a process of learning and in the field of adult education it is increasingly being used as such. Co-operative, participatory and action research are being advanced as means by which individuals and groups may learn and grow. There are now numerous examples of communities, groups and processes which have been transformed through individuals and groups engaging in a process of inquiry.

Not only is adult learning making use of research processes, there is growing recognition that research is influenced by ideas from adult learning. Researchers learn while carrying out research and as such they can provide excellent examples of independent, autonomous adult learners.

But what do researchers learn in the course of carrying out research projects? To what extent does what researchers learn depend on the subject matter of their study and to what extent is it an intrinsic part of the process of research itself? What do adults learn by engaging in research? Does the learning in which researchers engage change them as people? If so, in what ways?

This paper suggests that while the intrinsic features of research appear to contribute to researchers' learning, it is factors extrinsic to the research process to which they attribute life changes. Similarly, it is factors which are extrinsic to the research process which are changing its methodology and focus. Internal changes brought about by postmodernism and postpositivism are perceived to be having a limited effect. This has considerable implications for arguments suggesting that research can be used for the purposes of personal and community transformation. This paper illustrates the ways in which academic researchers change and, with the development of new knowledge, contain that process. It illuminates how individuals learn and also, by considering how research is changing, examines how research communities learn.

Background

The research process has not traditionally been a subject for study. What we know about the process of research mainly comes, not from empirical studies, but from the philosophical and general literature. This work suggests that a shift is occurring in the nature and kind of research which is being undertaken, that research in all disciplines is undergoing transformation and that research is in a state of transition from a relatively stable view of its methodology and purpose towards an uncertain and far more diffuse pattern of studies.

The purpose of this paper is to report on some findings of the first phase of a study designed to investigate how research is experienced by those who carry it out. Academics in three discipline domains who hold Australian Research Council (ARC) grants were invited to participate. ARC grants are highly competitive and there is evidence that seniority is required to acquire one (Bazeley *et al.* 1996). Thirty academics from traditional disciplines were interviewed.

Interviewees were asked what they believe they learnt through doing their research and how they thought they had changed as a person in carrying it out. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using phenomenographic techniques. In phenomenography the intention is to describe an 'outcome space' which is the sum of the conceptions of individuals. This paper therefore does not quantify the conceptions of researchers; it merely illustrates the range of their conceptions.

What do adults learn when doing research?

Most of these successful researchers recognised that their research activities resulted in learning: of facts, techniques, knowledge, skills, ideas and information. Some said that they were never not learning. Indeed, the whole process of researching involves a lot of learning. Some conceptualised their learning in general terms: the very fact of collecting information from background reading, from various data sources and from experimentation, then integrating this and coming up with new insights.

Others conceptualised what they were learning within the content of that learning. For example, one indicated she was learning a lot about the explorer, Lady Jane Franklin. This was leading into new areas of reading where she was learning about the historical context and the meaning Jane Franklin gave to her world. Another researcher mentioned new information which is coming to light:

> Australian freshwater invertebrates have largely been ignored and this is new for me and it's new for Australia. So that has been an incredibly steep learning curve and all the techniques that have been required to address the questions of interest have all been new to me as well.

This openness to new areas of understanding characterises these successful learners. Their conceptions have an inward focus. Recognition or reward may follow but that is a secondary thing. Learning is fun. The main source of satisfaction is in the understanding. Their conceptions of learning are associated with engagement with the material and the development of meaning; the mental stimulation: *'stretching my mind'*, *'exploring ideas'*, *being 'turned* *on by intellectual inquiry', 'mental engagement with ideas', 'the excitement of the unfamiliar'.* Remembering things is less important than the meaning that they attach to large amounts of data and the way in which their knowledge is built up over a life-time. The satisfaction is the understanding or the getting things working:

> It's thinking long and hard over a period of years and sort of coming back to it and coming back to it and ultimately understanding it, completely.

Other conceptions focus more on contributing to societal understanding. One researcher, for example, described how rewarding and fulfilling is the whole process of finding new information, interpreting information already known, coming up with new interpretations and then communicating that to the media:

> actually contributing to the ways in which Australians understand their own history.

Learning, then, is clearly taking place. These are expert and committed adult learners. Some described the satisfaction they gain from research as an addiction or a passion:

> I do feel starved if for some reason. ... there are so many meetings ... and the end of the day comes and I actually haven't been able to do any research.
>
> So far as I could I would simply carry on doing research. Research is a natural form of life for me. I did research from 6 to 9 on Christmas morning before I started getting involved ... before the rest of the family got up.
>
> It's a drug ... I don't think you choose research, research chooses you.

But to what extent has all this learning resulted in personal and significant change?

Perhaps rather surprisingly, researchers more often attributed changes in their lives which had occurred as a result of their research to extrinsic factors than to factors related to learning. There were three types of response:

1. Doing research had not resulted in any significant changes in their lives;
2. Extrinsic factors associated with research had resulted in significant changes;
3. Learning and ideas engaged in during the course of research had led to significant changes.

Some researchers did not attribute any personal changes to their lives as a result of their learning suggesting it is not possible to separate out the changes due to research from the process of maturation. Several demonstrated a view of their personality as being fixed. *'I don't think I've changed; ... I've learnt more but my attitude hasn't changed'.*

One mentioned how at the age of four he had demonstrated a scientific mind:

> The burning desire to make the discoveries somehow has to be there from a fairly early age ... I can remember I think, as a four year old asking my ... asking whether ... I'd learnt from my father that ice was zero degrees centigrade and boiling water was 100 degrees and I wondered whether if you got equal amounts of both would it be 50 degrees. So in retrospect that was quite a cunning little thing to ask.

Secondly, some researchers conceptualised personal change as coming about for extrinsic reasons. Significant changes in their lives brought about by research were due to the opportunities research had provided, not due to learning. Research was why they got their job; the reason why their career took the path it did; how they met their partner. In some cases this meant changes in country; moving to Australia, for example. For others, research had opened up opportunities for living in different cultures and this had had transformative effects on their lives:

> I've actually gone to England and ... to stay for several months ... inhabit a house and get to know the local shops and sort of ... try to come to terms with the slightly weird sort of culture of Cambridge ... (It's) added to life experience ... being aware that there's a cultural difference in Australian culture. So it's sort of mind blowing in itself.

Changes also were attributed to the demands that research places on life and on being in a university environment.

Allied to this second type of response is the idea that research is an arena for social interaction. This creates opportunities for personal change including going to conferences and getting feedback on research from colleagues the world over. Contributing to a community of scholars with similar interests is a source of satisfaction. This might mean being known as the expert or *'being one of a group of people who are controlling the subject in the world'*, or it might simply be the pleasure of collaboration. Research *'opens doors'* into other communities.

Some researchers talked of the way in which their research had developed their personal confidence. Again this stems from external factors: from publication and from feedback from colleagues:

> Your confidence is built up and I suppose then ... it ... sort of inspires you with a sense that you do know something about — the subject — and I suppose from there you can go on to deal with bigger questions. I think you start to think very much more broadly ...
>
> In terms of ... self worth and confidence and personal growth (research has) been really important to me.

The third cluster of conceptions focused on the fact that pursuing the ideas of the research is what they do to find themselves. The intellectual issues explored are so narrow and yet they illuminate issues of personal relevance. For example, one said you learn about yourself from studying history; you learn about a lot of the complexity of life.

Several researchers had become more sanguine; learning not to take oneself too seriously; learning to accept one's limits. *'You learn how much you don't know'*, you *'become more sceptical'*. As you get older you get a better idea of what can be managed, or although you start of fairly respectful of ideas, after a while *'you just say this is a load of rubbish'* .

How is research changing?

Over the course of this century, as is now well documented, there has been serious questioning of traditional ideas about knowledge and truth. Indeed, an enormous wealth of discussion and debate, coming from philosophers of science, has surrounded these issues over a number of decades and has been sustained by experimental and empirical findings. The mechanistic, objectivist, realist, empiricist tradition of inquiry known as positivism has been challenged on many levels and in many disciplines:

> Science has ... been seen as transcendent and decontextualised. Knowledge as well as the knowing subject, therefore becomes context-free. Rationality is cast as universal and transcendental, operating across all historical and social contexts and practices but independent of all of them ... Kuhn (1970) redirects our gaze from the disembodied subject of reason as the source of knowledge to a source in paradigms, traditions and knowledge-producing communities. (Usher and Edwards 1995, 36-37)

Habermas (1987) drew attention to the way in which knowledge serves particular interests. Postmodern ideas have subsequently pointed to the context-bound nature of discourse and to the ways in which the 'grand narratives' (Skinner 1985) serve the interests of particular social groups.

Lyotard (1993) has shown how what counts as knowledge and what counts as an appropriate method for generating it are bound up with questions of power.

In this context, new forms of inquiry have emerged, including attempts to define research methodologies which transcend the rules of positivism (for example, Guba 1990; Reason 1988, 1994); feminist research (Code 1991); critical ethnography (Carspecken 1991), and hermeneutic phenomenology (Van Manen 1990).

Conceptions of how research is changing

When we come to look at the ways in which research was seen to be changing for our researchers what we find is somewhat surprising. In the context of debates concerning changes in the nature of knowledge, we might expect significant shifts to have occurred. It is perhaps surprising that some researchers conceptualised research as being essentially unchanged from the 18th and 19th centuries.

By and large changes to research were conceptualised as being a result of pressures coming from outside the discipline. Several researchers mentioned increased pressure to find funding. No longer is it possible to opt out of research, nor to do research which does not lead to publications or funding. Research is becoming more demanding and more competitive. The increased costs of research, or rather the devolution of these costs to the researchers, mean that they have to take on the responsibility for getting funds which are increasingly difficult to find.

Increased demands in other areas of academic life mean life has made research consistently more difficult: for example, the teaching load has increased, collaboration with industry and applied research are *'the flavour of the decade'*, doing more managing of research projects and less *'hands-on stuff'*.

Economic pressure is making research more output oriented. Finishing is more important than the process:

> Research used to be something you steeped yourself in ... a month or two at a time and then getting out there for an extended period whereas now ... the culture of research and the climate of the present is that research is about ... define a project in order to get a grant ... you sort of do research ... it's largely defined by which grants you get ... creates a very different kind of methodology in a way, which for me is problematic. I do spurts of work ... I rush ... and do it fairly quickly. There is no sort of sustained, ongoing developmental engagement with the material.

The pressure to publish articles is a cause of concern. It means that there was not always time to do what they want to do. Counting publications contributes to research being more outcomes-oriented. This has led to researchers having to change the way they conceptualise their research and is affecting the character of research. It has now to be conceptualised in terms of projects. The funding agencies are forcing an atomistic conception of research. This is unfortunate, particularly since some researchers conceptualised their life as one long research project. There were some more serious reservations about what people were publishing. Some were seriously worried by the tendency to publish shorter articles which did not allow for ideas to develop over time:

> nobody has ten good journal ideas a year, nobody but nobody. One or two if you're lucky ...
>
> ... papers are tending to approach nearer and nearer to the least publishable unit.

A number of researchers mentioned how information technology had changed research. Many were anxious to point out that these changes were superficial, not fundamental. In the natural sciences:

> *there are gadgets which enable you to do things you couldn't do before but you still have to do the work: it's just the machinery costs more.*

The use of the computer can speed things up but it has increased the expectations:

> Now research has to be so detailed. You have to have huge footnotes with umpteen references because people expect you to have access to all those references ... that's made it a bit more of a challenge.

Computers change techniques but don't add to new knowledge (conceived as the ideas which come with the linking of facts). In some subject areas the existence of databases has transformed the discipline as there is information available which wasn't before: *'you don't have to clutter up the brain with all that information'*. Having material in a database means that the researcher is able to concentrate on higher level activities.

But to what extent are the intellectual changes recognised by our successful researchers? In what ways are postmodern and post positivist ideas thought to be influencing the practice of research in different fields? There was a conception that *'paradigms are changing things all the time'* but that essentially this describes how the context of their research changes.

The actual activities researchers engage in are unchanged. The discipline changes but the researchers continue doing the same thing; researching the same issues:

> At times there are shifts in paradigm where you can see some sections of what is known in a whole new light and that doesn't necessarily extend the boundaries of knowledge but it does expand people's consciousness.

In the humanities, postmodernism was mentioned as a way in which the subject content had changed bringing into the arena new areas of inquiry, for example, popular culture. The ways in which postmodern ideas are influencing research were conceptualised, by and large, as being unrelated to what the researchers personally were doing. For example even though it was recognised that *'the bottom has dropped out of English literature'* and that the questions which are asked had changed, postmodernism was not seen as having any radical effect. Postpositivist and postmodern ideas are only conceived as affecting the intellectual context of their discipline. Individual researchers change the content of their research, or as in the case of English literature, the questions which are being asked. They do not, on the whole, have a view of these ideas transcending disciplines, nor do they appear to be aware of the radical challenges to methodology noted above.

Conclusion

Research has been advocated, and is now being widely used, as a vehicle to effect personal and community change. However, the findings discussed here suggest caution in simply assuming that engaging in research is necessarily going to lead to such changes. They suggest that external pressures may be more likely to bring about fundamental change than the individual learnings of the people within the group. Traditional modes of inquiry appear to be able to 'contain' radical changes. This is not to deny that personal and social changes can be brought about by research; merely to suggest that there is not an inevitable link. Caution about the choice of methods and the conceptions of research held by the adult learners who are engaging in this kind of development work need to be carefully considered.

We have seen how researchers conceptualised the way in which they learn through their research activities. We noted that how they see themselves was not significantly changed as a result of that learning. In other words, they appear to have kept their learning contained. It has not become a vehicle for personal transformation. We can see a parallel with the research community as a whole. Research is seen as changing in response to external pressures; not in response to the intellectual climate. Such changes may affect the emphasis of the research; its content; but does not appear to have significant effects on research methodology. Changes to the ways in which people research are largely unaffected. Indeed, changes brought about by pressures of government funding appear to have done more to change research methodology in traditional disciplines than the shifts in intellectual climate.

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Rewriting the boundaries of social discourse: collaborative inquiry into women's sexual identity development

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This research is based on the sexual life histories of ten women, some heterosexual and some lesbian identified, as narrated to each other in two collaborative inquiry groups. Our ages ranged from 41-51 and all of us were professionally educated and employed. Although our inquiry focused on the sexual life histories of these women, in this paper, we address the process of narration within collaborative inquiry groups as a method of cultural change. We examine identity as the intersection of self and culture, narrative as the articulation of identity, and unnarrated experience as subjugated knowledges. We begin to build a theory of cultural change as occurring through the uncovering of silenced and subjugated knowledges, and the collective storying of these knowledges within the context of a collaborative inquiry group.

We present our data in fragments and woven throughout the theory we are beginning to build. We do not present any of the women's lives as a cohesive narrative, but instead present them in parts as pieces of a larger social narrative.

Identity and narrative

Society provides each us with narratives with which to make sense of our lives. Part of socialisation into a culture is to begin to story our lives in the same ways as those around us. These stories tell us what we should value and strive for in our lives. They tell us what we must avoid.

> Louise: I know *all my ideas of romance came from the movies.* Hopalong Cassidy and all those Superman/Lois Lane shows. And I never identified with any of the women parts. It's just that the women didn't do anything, and the men did all the action. That was like, you know, the exciting stuff.
>
> Krista: I can remember one time when I was about five or six, a little neighbourhood girl wanted me to play tea party. And normally I didn't do that sort of thing, but she was new in the neighbourhood and didn't have many friends. So, I thought, I will do it just this once. *So she said, do you want to be the mommy or the daddy? And I thought, gosh are those the only choices?* Are those my only options? Why can't I just be me?

Women's sexual development and changes in sexual orientation are ostensibly private affairs. However, scholarship in the last two decades has shown the ways in which much of what we consider to be individual and private life decisions are in fact constructed according to the narratives dominant in the culture. Our identities, whether chosen or assigned, serve as our way of making sense of ourselves and others in relationship to our culture. Our sexual identities situate those aspects we consider to be most intimate at the intersection between self and culture or public and private.

> Mercedes: Well, my story will only take about five minutes anyway. I've never actually reflected on my sexuality. I don't think I have a clear sexual identity. It has more to do with people than it has to do with identifying with any sexuality in particular. *I don't feel like I identify with one community or another.*
>
> Lucinda: It really never occurred to me that I was a lesbian. Because I knew what lesbians looked like and sounded like. I'd seen them in New Orleans and California. *But I had no sense of affinity with the lesbians I'd ever seen, so it didn't think that that's what I was.* But I happened to really be in love.
>
> Jane: The weekend that I moved out, my husband got into our address book and called everybody that we ever knew to tell them that I was a lesbian and that in fact, everybody that I ever knew was a lesbian...It was pretty bad for six months because everybody just divided up. *In some ways he did me a favour by telling everybody because then it was just out there. So it was okay; we're going to have to deal with it.*

Narrative is the articulation of our identities. We narrate our lives so that we can make sense of our relationships to the world. Narrative implies both a speaker and a listener thus, ensuring that it is a social process. We often rehearse parts of our life narrative to ourselves as though we were our own audience as a way of refining how we understand and present who we are so that our lives will seem more coherent or compelling. When we narrate our lives, we bring form to our experiences, selecting some aspects to include and omitting others. Those we select, we place in relationship to other experiences and social knowledge, forming stories that bring order to our past, situate us in the present, and give us direction for the future. None of us can tell the whole of our lives. We necessarily weave in some experiences and exclude others. Michael White and David Epston write:

> The structuring of narrative requires recourse to a selective process in which we prune, from our

> experience, those events that do not fit with the dominant evolving stories that we and others have about us. Thus, over time and of necessity, much of our stock of lived experience goes unstoried and is never 'told' or expressed. It remains amorphous, without organisation and without shape (1990, 12).

The knowledge that remains unstoried can be understood to be a knowledge without language. Foucault (1980) tells us that the process by which we select the experiences we tell is a power saturated one. Our unstoried knowledges can be understood as subjugated in that they have been erased or silenced through the colonisation of space by a language that stories the dominant while ignoring other knowledge.

> Judy: *There's so much silence around sex it seems.* I mean it was boring. And how embarrassing to tell each other this is boring. We believed we must be doing it wrong or were built wrong or something.

> Karen: So my mother said, 'Well, Mary had to go to California because she did something bad, and you can go to California and get it fixed'. *And I said what was it? She said, 'You don't need to know that. All you really need to know is don't ever do what Mary did'.* Of course by this time I knew it had something to do with sex because my mother couldn't say that it was sex. But all she said was, 'You don't ever do it because it's bad. And if you wanted to be a good girl you wouldn't do it'.

Foucault names as subjugated knowledges those that have been written out of history such as the ideas and knowledge of women and those that are 'indigenous' or 'naïve' and are located low down on the hierarchy, beneath the required level of cognition or scientificity.

Subversive knowledge

Women's sexuality can be understood as subjugated knowledge. It has often remained invisible, as this study shows, even to women themselves. The narrative of marriage and family has not only dominated our public discourse, but has structured our economic and legal systems to such an extent and for so long that we are only beginning to fitfully and painfully work toward the equalisation of pay, benefits, property rights, and opportunities. Similarly, the marriage and family narrative has historically been supported by systems of thought which simultaneously bar women from narrating their own experience while placing control of women's sexuality within the machinations of larger social systems.

To that end, women's sexuality has been codified by multiple mythologies and modes of discourse. These can be understood to not only structure how we think about sexuality, but to limit the decisions we can make and what we can do about sexuality, as well. Barthes (1972) writes that such mythologies are types of speech chosen by history that have moved from the realm of innocent speech to a 'naturalised discourse' that maintains power through 'the pretension of transcending into a factual system' (1972, 131-134). Butler suggests that such mythologies are 'sedimented' through the 'reiteration of a norm or set of norms' which form 'regulatory schemas' (1993, 14).

D'Emillio and Freedman (1988) have chronicled the historical shifts in the dominant discourse of the sexual narratives in this country. In colonial culture, for example, the clergy and community monitored sexuality closely, and sex was privileged only within marriage and then only as reproduction. Over the last century and a half the cultural control over sexuality shifted from the purview of the clergy to the medical community. Even today the medical implications of sexually related issues such as birth control and AIDS keep us ensnared in scientific sexual discourse.

Thus, what is on one hand a seemingly benign narrative of family and community, on the other hand has been so protected by elaborate systems of thought and social organisation, that most other ways in which women experience themselves sexually go unnarrated.

> Judy: *I thought I knew lesbians, but I didn't know lesbians at all. Just images that didn't have anything to do with real people.* I don't know that I even thought it was a sexual thing...So I was in graduate school before I knew someone who was gay of either gender.

> Sharon: *I think part of the struggle in living outside the social norms is that we don't have any template.* And you don't know whether you feel something different because you're not compatible with the individual or because of your own needs and identity. I mean to me, there are so many complexities in a relationship with somebody that it's amazing that anyone decides they're lesbian or gay or just a person that doesn't want to be coupled. *There's all this pressure even if you're the same sex, to live together and to form a household. To do all that so that you're creating some other kinds of forms and there are all these shoulds.*

The narrations that do survive exist, like the lesbian narrative, as counter to the heterosexual one, or like the abuse narratives, as shadows to it. The experiences of women that remain untold constitute the silent narratives of women's sexuality and are, in fact, not just subjugated knowledge, as Foucault asserts, but subversive in that when it is voiced, it becomes apparent to all who share in it that it is profoundly disruptive of the status quo.

Disruptive inquiry

This research began with the intention of learning something about the transformative learning process through investigating the process of sexual identity development. Our inquiry process was collaborative in that all ten participants were also researchers; we all agreed on the topic of inquiry and the data we gathered were the joint property of all participants. Although not all of us were interested in doing the work of research such as transcribing, coding, and writing, we all participated in interpretation and decisions about the dissemination of the inquiry results.

We shared our histories over a period of two days with a follow-up day a year later in which we updated each other on our histories, reflected on the collaborative inquiry experience, and examined the coding and elaborated on and contested tentative interpretations of the data. Telling our life histories was important in several ways: it allowed us to think in advance about how we might address the topic; it placed the events in each of our lives in a larger socio-historical context; and it provided the forum for a level of intimacy to develop between us that enabled laughter, empathy, reframing, questioning, and acceptance through more complete understanding of individual experiences to develop.

However, as the inquiry continued, it became increasingly apparent that the identity claims each of us made reflected only a part of the lives we led. Sexual identity seemed to be more a reflection of a cultural identification than sexual behaviour. We had assumed that one's sexual identity was a description of one's sexual behaviour and discovered as we listened to each woman's narrative history that although the two are related, they are not the same. In other words, lesbian women had sexual relationships with men and straight women had intimate relationships with other women. And that this crossover occurred far more frequently than any of us had suspected.

What was so surprising about this was that each of us had believed not only about others, but about ourselves that our sexual identity and our sexual behaviour were the same. We can only explain this apparent contradiction between how we know ourselves and what we do as existing because no coherent public narrative exists that enables women to claim a more complex identity than the polarised heterosexual/homosexual binary expressed in the dominant heterosexual and counter-dominant lesbian narratives.

> Louise: What attracted me to Gina and binds me to her is not necessarily the physical part of the relationship although that's there. It's really our intellectual and our values systems. The fact we can talk, the level of communication we have, and the kind of commitment and support. All of those kinds of spiritual, intellectual, and affiliative aspects. That's what binds us. That's what's so attractive.

We have no narratives in which sexuality is linked to intellectual and spiritual affinity and women seek sex with men because it is less complex. Instead, we have only the dominant narrative of marriage and family and the counter-dominant narrative of a subjugated and isolated lesbian minority.

The group inquiry process allowed us to hear our own experiences echoed in the experiences of others. What had up until this time simply existed in our lives as fragmented and unarticulated pieces, began to take on a narrative form within the group. The story as it began to take shape was that women's sexuality, our sexuality, is far more complex and multidimensional than our culture had enabled us to think. It was neither in conformance with nor in reaction to the dominant narrative. Instead, every one of the participating women, whether straight or lesbian, told a unique story of finding a way to live as a misfit to the dominant narrative.

> Jane: I always felt huge and very unattractive and unsexy. And my best girlfriend was a half inch taller than I was and I know that was why we were friends...She and I were called the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building by our classmates...Plus, we were real academically oriented, and that was also negative. You just weren't supposed to do those things so that just made me feel more isolated...I don't think I really dealt with my sexuality at all or my sexual feelings. I was just very academic and thought, I'm not very attractive. No one's going to like me anyway, *so I just won't worry about that.*

> Karen: One of my problems was this whole Mexican thing. And the way it affected me, even sexually at the time, was everything I did — all of my bodily functions, eating, going to the bathroom, everything — seemed to me to be so different. I didn't have the poise and the grace that everybody else had. But I really wanted to fit in desperately...I tried to get a boyfriend, and I got one. But I didn't like him. I had one because if you had one, you could be cool. I don't think I ever was cool. *I was just trying to be cool.*

But our inquiry did not end here. One year later, the researchers returned to update each other on our life histories, discuss interpretations, and reflect on the inquiry process. At that time we listened in amazement as we told stories that reflected an increasing sense of comfort with experiences that were less in conformance with polarised sexual identity than with the more complex understanding of sexuality we had begun to form in the group.

> Carmen: Hearing everybody's experience and what was so powerful was this non black and white stuff. *That people had these varieties of experiences and that it was far more complex.* And there was much more room for different kinds of action and exploration that had nothing...that

> was all very private and had little to do with what's being said about sexuality in the culture. That really struck me.
>
> Judy: The differences don't put us too far apart anymore. And the similarities give us the glue to find the differences in ourselves.
>
> Krista: I knew my sexual identity wasn't compartmentalised. Or fit in little niches. It was very normalising to find out nobody else's does either. At least in that group. This big, broad breadth of experiences. I loved it.

In fact, we were all beginning to story our lives differently. This process began to move outside of the group as we each began exploring the question with other women.

> Sharon: *I've told a lot of people about this group*...Just some of the commonalities we found in that first session...to normalise each of our own situations.
>
> Ava: *Some of the things that we talked about in the group and that I learned about in the group, I've been able to use in my sessions with clients.* It's changed the way I think about things.
>
> Lucinda: The group has really opened me up. I never thought I could be any different than I have been, I mean in terms of who I am with. *But now, I've been thinking, maybe I could actually be with a man.*

Interestingly, none of us had ever systematically reflected on our own sexual life histories. They were, in fact, shrouded in a secrecy born out of our sense that we were out of compliance, whether or not we wanted to be, with the dominant, and even the counter dominant, sexual narratives.

Implications

Although this study focused on women's sexual identity development, it has broad ranging implications for social change. If we understand society to be constructed and reproduced through shared narrative, then an important tool for social change is the rewriting of these shared narratives. However, it is not enough for a single person to write a new social narrative. A single narrative that is at odds with the dominant one either fades or brands its proponent as mad. For a narrative to have the power to endure, it must be collectively constructed and reflect the experience of a group of people.

To experience our lives as different from the dominant narrative is frightening. If this experience is supported by a strong counter narrative such as that of lesbians or certain minority racial and ethnic groups, we can find a space to live out our knowledge knowing there are others like ourselves. However, when our experience remains unarticulated and inchoate, we come to know ourselves as misfits, like the women in this group. The power of collaborative inquiry is that it enables subjugated knowledge to be voiced, thus becoming the subversive knowledge that contributes to the disruption of a hegemonic dominant narrative. What was once inchoate and private becomes articulate and public.

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Making the invisible visible by challenging the myth of the universal teacher

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The adult education research on race and gender seldom focuses and when it does either considers the adult learner or the professional development of the minority faculty (Collard and Stalker 1991; Hayes and Colin III 1994; Johnson-Bailey, Tisdell and Cervero 1994). However, this literature only offers entry into the discussion on how the race and gender of the teacher affects the teaching-learning process. The adult education writers do not pursue those avenues but instead imply that there is a universal teacher void of race and gender in the classroom (Apps 1991; Barer-Stein and Draper 1994; Brookfield 1986, 1990; 1995; Draves 1988; Galbraith, 1990; Knowles 1980; Knox 1986; Lenz 1982; Seaman and Fellenz 1989). They myth of the universal teacher proposes that all teachers would encounter the same results as any other teacher if they follow prescriptive practices outlined in books on teaching and facilitating adult learners (Daloz 1986; Dickerson 1973; Jones 1986; Reese 1978; Renners 1994; Westmeyer 1988).

As an African-American woman mathematics teacher I believe that the myth of the universal teacher renders the challenges of being an African-American woman mathematics teacher invisible. My belief is informed by the research on marginality of African-American women in the academy (Alfred 1995; Graves 1990; Gregory 1995; James and Farmer 1993; Moses 1989; Reid 1990; Wyche and Graves 1992) and research related to race gender and mathematics (Cross and Slater 1994; Donaldson 1989; Kenschaft 1981; Rogers and Rosser 1995; Secada, Fennema, and Adajian 1995) and the double barrier to mathematics that exist for African-American women. African-American women carry a unique development and a personal history into the educational environment (Etter-Lewis 1993; James & Farmer 1993). Narratives of African-American women adult educators suggest this has an effect on their role as teacher (Clarke and Blythe 1962; Etter-Lewis 1993; Field and Field 1983; Foster 1987; 1989; 1990; 1991; hooks 1994; Robinson 1978). Additionally, the research on race, gender, and mathematics shows that African-American women mathematics teachers are affected significantly by racism and sexism.

Teachers are affected by institutional and classroom environments along with both political and societal factors. Teacher's interpretation of their experiences are influenced by their cultural background and their own sense of personal agency (Dilworth 1990; Foster 1993; Tisdell 1993). Moreover, Lappan and Briars (1995) advocate that teachers have beliefs about teaching and the teaching-learning process that stem from their own experiences and influence their teaching practices. These attitudes according to Carl (1995) inevitably affect student achievement more than any other classroom factor.

Purpose and significance

The purpose of this study was to understand how the classroom experiences of African-American women who teach mathematics to adults perpetuate or transcend the myth of the universal teacher. The research question that guided the study was, What common themes emerge in the classroom experiences of African-American women who teach mathematics to adults?

Research does not document the instructional experiences of African-American teachers nor does the research distinguish African-American teachers by gender (Foster 1997; Howard-Vital 1989). Much can be learned from the experiences of African-American women teachers (Casey 1993; Foster 1990; 1991a; 1991b; 1991c; Peterson 1990). Etter-Lewis says, 'The notion that African-American women are an invisible group on the sidelines and that they can be easily combined with other groups is a convenient fiction that conceals their power and importance' (1993, xvii). The development of a body of literature specific to the experiences of post-secondary African-American women teachers makes the invisible visible while making explicit the fallacy of the universal teacher (Howard-Vital 1989).

The experiences of African-American women who teach mathematics at the post-secondary level are completely absent from the literature. This study offers research specific to a group that had not been studied. Given that African-American women compose only 1% of the mathematics faculty and 2.3% of all faculty at US colleges and universities (US Department of Education 1995) and that they have historically experienced discrimination in the academy, the experiences of these African-American women post-secondary teachers may introduce meaningful discussions addressing the relationship between the rhetoric of the field and the reality of an invisible segment of the field.

Along with adding to the research base on African-American women in higher education, another contribution of this study is that it was conducted through a Black feminist lens. According to Howard-Vital (1989), 'A body of research on African-American women in higher education provides groundwork for realising our history, dispelling myths, relating our experiences, formulating theoretical frameworks, and establishing our identity in higher education (and in the larger social structure)' (1989, 180). Moreover, James and Farmer propose that 'unless we as African-American women shape a reality, and make a space for ourselves to creatively share our stories, education remains an elitist, White and/or male domain' (1993, 3). The sparse amount of research on African-American women in higher education has 'suffered from scholarly disinterest and been filtered through the perspectives that are androcentric and/or ethnocentric' (Howard-Vital 1989, 191). As an African-American woman feminist mathematics teacher, I believed that it was essential to conduct this research through a Black feminist lens to engage in 'theoretical interpretations of Black women's reality by those who live it' (Collins 1991, 22). Not only does Black feminist thought authenticate the independent specialised knowledge that can be produced by African-American women, but also it invites African-American women to respect their own subjective knowledge base (Collins 1991). So this study not only helps us to challenge the myth of the universal teacher but also helps us to give voice to an invisible segment of the adult education field because to challenge the myths that exist about African-American women in the academy, writing by and not simply about African-American women must occur (James and Farmer 1993). Furthermore, Collins (1986) argues that a Black feminist through her 'insider-outsider' position can see patterns and interrelationships, causes and effects, and implications of questions that those who have been a part of the dominant culture do not see. Because this research was specific to a group not previously studied, it is warranted that this research be viewed through lenses that clarify the standpoints for and of African-American women.

Methodology

A qualitative design with interviewing and observing as its primary methodological tools was used. The purposeful sample consisted of seven African-American women ages 30-45 from four south-eastern states in the United States of America who taught mathematics at either a technical school or a community college.

They were interviewed and observed. The format included two interviews and one observation. The first interview was a semi-structured interview in which the interviewees were asked from an interview guide. After the interview the researcher observed the participant teaching mathematics to adults. The researcher observed and took field notes as the participant conducted her mathematics class. After the classroom observations, a second interview took place to discuss what occurred in the participant's classroom when the researcher came to observe. Like the first interview, the researcher tape recorded responses and took notes as appropriate during the interview. All data were analysed.

Findings

The findings revolve around four themes relating to teaching philosophy, issues related to credibility, teacher-student interactions, and teaching practices. The philosophies that govern these African-American women post-secondary mathematics teachers' classrooms are directly influenced by their past conditions, relationships, and perceptions. As a result of their marginality in their classrooms and in some cases their marginality in society these adult educators seek to empower all and not to marginalise their students. Each woman had a different story to tell about her experiences as a learner and it became apparent in the collective narratives that their teaching experiences helped them to develop teaching philosophies that seek to reach even those mathematics learners who are considered to be on the margin. Also, their teaching philosophies have a goal of inciting students to become productive life long learners. Consequently, the combined effect of each teacher's vast range of social experiences has resulted in the standards they uphold and the goals that they promote. All of the women felt that as teachers they were the instruments that bridged students to lifelong learning. Their philosophies also shared the commonality of motivating students. All of their philosophies were aimed at reaching everyone and bring them to the centre of the learning environment. This was a direct influence of their culture which was influenced by their marginalisation which was a factor of their African-American race and female gender.

In each of these African-American women post-secondary mathematics teachers' stories credibility issues related to their being African-American women teaching mathematics materialised. Also, credibility issues were noted in the classroom observations of these African-American women mathematics teachers. The credibility issues were a result of these educators being African-American women teaching in field that is dominated by White males in addition to prevailing negative stereotypes about African-American women.

These African-American women perceived the need for credibility. Facing this perceived need for credibility these mathematics educators have developed a coping mechanism of self-validation to cope with the resisters, doubters, as well as those who confronted them in the classroom.

In addition to these African-American women mathematics teachers having a sense of their own ability as mathematics teacher, they exhibited ways in which they tried to prove that they were good teachers. Although these mathematics educators had received various college degrees and taken classes beyond their last degree, they recognised their basic knowledge was in question and made greater efforts to establish their credibility. This burden of proof seemed necessary because they were African-American women teaching mathematics in a White male domain. All of these African-American women mathematics teachers worked at being organised in their presentation of the material. They desired to convey to students their extensive familiarity with the material. There also seemed to be a realisation among these African-American women that good teaching did not necessarily translate into being credible. Because of who they were and what they were teaching they had to go about aggressively establishing their credibility. This was in some instances explicitly stated in their interviews and in other cases inferred from the observations of their mathematics classes. These African-American women post-secondary teachers have developed criteria that they use to support the notion that they have credibility in the classroom despite the negative actions of many doubting students who had doubts of the credibility of these adult educators because they are African-American and female.

The teacher/student interactions that occurred between these African-American women mathematics teachers and their students were influenced by the race and gender of the teacher in connection with their teaching practices. As a result of these adult educators being women they tended to push for more interactions with their students in the classroom. But because they are African-American women teaching at the post-secondary level teaching in a field that is comprised mostly of White men they receive challenges from male students especially White males and tend to bond more with their women students especially African-American women. The more privileged students are the ones who resisted these African-American women's authority in the classroom and set out to control the classroom happenings.

Several of these adult educators believe that students treat them differently because of their race and gender. Students do not perceive them as automatically having credibility nor do they treat these African-American women like they treat other teachers. Accordingly, the majority of the interactions within gender are positive interactions. Some of the within gender interactions are split along the lines of race, age, and class. Most of the male interactions are heavily negative but distinctions do fall out along the lines of race and age. Sometimes the roles delineated by society confounded the interactions in the classroom because students would succumb to some of the patriarchal roles that oppress others because of their race and gender. Even though all of these teachers were African-American women their race did not facilitate positive interactions with African-American students in all cases. Gender did not always serve as a bond that facilitated positive interactions between these women and their females students. Credibility issues played a large part in how White males student interacted with these African-American mathematics teachers. Gender issues contributed to how men interacted with these women mathematics teachers. Also, the teaching philosophy promoted by these adult educators influenced their teacher-student interactions. For instance, the idea of being equitable in the classroom was a big part of many of the teaching philosophies mentioned by these educators and as such some of their interactions would against the norm to facilitate achieving equity.

The African-American women post-secondary mathematics teachers studied reflected and drew from their own experiences in the classroom as learners to inform their teaching practices and strategies. As these women spoke of what they do in their mathematics classrooms, they referred to the practices of their own teachers and their experiences as learners. In the narratives and classroom observations of these African-American women it became apparent that they exhibited an experiential mode of teaching based on the ways that their teachers had taught and interacted with them. Some of these adult educators' former teachers recognised their abilities or gave them opportunities to determine their aptitude. Other former teachers laid the burden of their own prejudice, racism, sexism on them. If these African-American women educators perceived that a strategy used or a behaviour exhibited by a former teacher was effective in reaching them then they modelled that strategy or behaviour. However, if a former teacher displayed a teaching practice or behaviour that was inhibitive to their learning then these African-American women mathematics teachers modified it to produce a teaching strategy that would aid students in the learning process. All of these mathematics teachers mentioned gaps in accessibility to information in their own educational pursuits.

From this experiential base these African-American women post-secondary mathematics teachers draw upon to inform their teaching practices they have developed practices that contain two major focuses-— accessibility and the empowerment of learners. Their teaching practices involved making mathematics accessible and relevant by building on students' experiential backgrounds, using multiple forms of assessment, embracing a wide variety of delivery formats, a diverse set of curricular materials, engaging in analysis of alternative viewpoints and actively involving the student in thinking and analysing. They used humour and an emphasis on multiple languages to create a climate conducive to learning. These African-American women mathematics teachers sought to engage the entire class in the learning process and not just those society says are mathematically elite. Their teaching practices were aimed at empowering students. This was accomplished by a connected teaching approach (Secada, Fennema, Adajian 1995) to mathematics that links learners' previous experiences and knowledge to mathematics so that it becomes more meaningful. Also, an emphasis on valuing students and promoting student involvement was another way these adult educators empowered their students through their teaching practices. Moreover, a more student-centred approach was used instead of the traditional teacher-centred pedagogical approach.

Discussion

Therefore it appears that four elements — experiences as learners, teaching philosophies, issues relating to credibility, and teacher-student interactions — are informed by these African-American women adult educators' race and gender. Their teaching philosophies, issues related to credibility, and their teacher-student interactions also influenced their teaching practices. So subsequently their race and gender influences their teaching practices. Their teaching philosophy has been informed by their race and gender. As learners of mathematics these African-American women were marginalised because of their race and gender. That marginalisation has prevailed upon these mathematics teachers to seek equity in the classroom and to teach students in the way that they wished they had been taught. As a result of these African-American women adult educators teaching in a non-traditional field they have to deal with many issues related to credibility. Therefore, one of their defence mechanisms is a strong sense of who they are and their excellence in teaching. In spite of this self confidence they work hard to establish credibility in their mathematics classroom and they each have developed strategies for assessing their credibility. These African-American women adult educators drawing on their experiences as learners realise that it is important how teachers and students interact and how students are treated in the classroom. These African-American women mathematics teachers have to deal with resistant challenging learners because of who they are and what they teach. Therefore, all of their narratives depict their active stance and extended effort in developing positive teacher-student interactions. These actions include affirming minorities and valuing diverse ways of learning.

Consequently, the classroom experiences that these African-American women teachers have is a direct result of their race and gender. Because of who they are these African-American women post-secondary mathematics teachers do not have prescriptive teaching practices but draw upon their own experiences to facilitate positive learning experiences for their students while combating negative credibility issues and teacher-student interactions. Throughout their interviews and classroom observation the impact of their race and gender on the learning environment was abundantly present. This study gives evidence that the myth of the universal teacher cannot be right. Accordingly, the implication resulting from this research is that adult educators need to consider the gender and race of the teacher in all its writings about the classroom climate, delivery, and praxis. We especially need to make an effort to examine our individual classrooms to see how our race and gender affects the teaching/learning environment.

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Reforming Australian education and training: accommodating to or breaking the boundaries?

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The theme of this conference — *Crossing borders, breaking boundaries* — is similar to that of the Australian Association for Research in Education's (AARE) — *Researching education in new times*. Both cases describe the context in which adult educators currently work as 'these post-modern' or 'new times'.

'Borders' and 'boundaries' conjure up several meanings. They can be personal, relating to individual identities; social, relating to difference based on age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, class or physical or mental ability; international, relating to geographical and political borders separating nations and peoples.

In post-modernist terminology 'new times' connote heterogeneity, fragmentation, de-centring, consumer empowerment, technological breakthroughs, an end to ideas of 'totality', 'universality' and 'grand narratives' — in sum an end to the 'modernist' project. (Usher and Edwards 1994; Edwards and Usher 1996). The 'new times' code relates to the nature of work and production; the arts and literature; the economy and the market; and education and training. It suggests that the political, economic and social changes since the early 1970s have re-invigorated capitalism combining post-Fordism, postindustrialism and postmodernism. The 'new times' political project simultaneously rejects 'totalising imperatives' and implicitly accepts the market as a supra-historical entity — a proposition which rests on a flawed periodising of history (Wood 1996) industrial relations (Hyman 1991) and work organisation (Pollert 1991).

Within this framework the ideas of border crossings and breaking boundaries are presented as more comprehensive and radical intellectual tools than such worn-out analyses as class and capitalism, despite capital's continuing drive to accumulate and extend its social relations.

On the one hand, the argument goes, capitalism has disintegrated to the extent that new social horizons have opened for consumers while work has become more flexible and creative combining to produce a new 'social' market. One effect has been the 'disturbingly pleasurable construction of multiple (post-modern) identities', 'constructed and manifested through images, consumption choices and lifestyles' (Edwards and Usher 1996, 234, 233)

On the other hand, capitalism is so pervasive that there is little hope for any challenge beyond the most localised and particular resistance. This has led to new ways of relating and accommodating to, rather than contesting, capitalism, both politically or intellectually.

The ephemeral and the substantial are not distinguished. A focus on the manifestations of change excludes analysis of the continuities. A current example is the finance industry's move to introduce P-ATMs (personal automatic teller machines) using smart card technology to enable consumers to make financial transactions from home. It is advertised as part of the 'brave, borderless future of financial services' (Allard 1997) Does this borderless future in any way challenge profit and power in the finance industry?

In Australia union leaders argued that their traditions were anachronistic. To consolidate its position in the economy and society the unions had to respond to the new order. A key element was a commitment to the benefits of education and training as a means of transforming society.

This paper is based on doctoral research in progress which looks at the Australian labour movement's expectations of economic restructuring and training reform under the Labour governments between 1983 and 1995.

It asks whether the Australian labour movement succeeded in breaking down old boundaries and divisions leading its members to a new place in society or whether it used even older methods of consensus and accommodation with existing power relations.

Australian training reform: a modernisation project.

The Australian labour movement's embrace of training reform shares something with the 'new times' view. The officials argued that a new more sophisticated trade unionism should adopt new methods and strategies to meet the challenges posed by rapid changes in technology and 'globalisation'.

The first expression of this new approach was the 1983 Prices and Incomes Accord between the ACTU (Australian Council of Trade Unions — the peak union body) and the ALP (Australian Labour Party). While a formal accord was a new development in Australia, similar 'social contracts' were well known in Western Europe. Indeed it was the experience of countries such as Sweden, Germany and Austria which attracted the attention of influential figures in the Australian labour movement.

Notable among these were leaders of the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) in the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union (AMWU) who gave both industrial and political leadership to a broader grouping of mainly left-wing unions and members of a broader left in the CPA, SPA (Socialist Party of Australia) and the left of the ALP. Though numerically small, these unions and individuals were extremely influential in setting a policy framework aimed at modernising Australian industry.

The Accord was promoted by some on the left as 'pre-figuring' or 'embryonic' socialism, as a 'revolutionary reform' (Stilwell 1986) and as a 'powerful engine for socialist advance' (Mathews 1986). It would not only ensure wages growth but also extend labour's access to political power through involvement in economic planning; widen the scope of the social wage; and extend industrial and political democracy.

'[Through] its involvement in the Accord and the politics of industrial regeneration, unionism has broken decisively with the older, narrower definition of its competence, to claim a qualitatively wider, initiating role in policy making and industry', it was argued. (Ewer, Higgins and Stevens 1987). The Accord was hailed as a 'radical new policy approach' to 'achieve gradual, though real, economic and social reform' (Tribune 1982).

The CPA, at its 1982 Congress, declared that: '... if the union movement takes a leading role in formulating policies to benefit the whole of the working class ... and full participation, democracy and mobilisation is developed, then a challenge to the ruling class can develop in a socialist direction' (cited in Stilwell 1986, 27)

What's more, it could be achieved without the Government even being aware of this. According to a leading Metalworkers' official, 'the reforms open up the possibility for us to mobilise and involve unionists and the public ... to generalise commitments to egalitarianism and strengthen the democratic process whether the government intends it or not' (Ogden 1984, 25)

The ACTU's 1987 blueprint for modernising the Australian economy, *Australia Reconstructed*, advocated policies on investment, industry, and education and training modelled on the north European economies' 'consensual processes'. It was described as a 'victory for the left who have argued for an alternative to the capitulation to market forces' (Tribune).

The same year the Government released *Skills for Australia*, announcing its intention to 'make our education and training systems more attuned to the new requirements for skills demanded by our changing economic circumstances' (Dawkins 1987, 5)

The mainstream promoted the Accord's early years as a time of strategic advance. Labour movement leaders from across the political spectrum agreed that the very survival of the movement, and the living standards of its constituents, were dependant on making Australian capitalism more modern, technologically responsive and internationally competitive. A restructured education and training system based on competency, it was argued, would contribute to these goals and improve individual prospects through investing in their human capital.

Labour's leaders saw their role as not only assisting in modernising Australian capitalism but in taking the leading role because of the inefficiencies of Australian business. Union leaders such as the ACTU's Secretary Bill Kelty saw themselves as saving Australian industry in spite of Australian capitalists: 'By and large, employer organisations are hopeless. By and large, they are troglodyte organisations. They are just lucky that they have a government and unions, for example, prepared to accept the need for profits, accept the need for growth' (AFR 30.9.85).

Modernisation: strategic advance or defensive reaction?

As part of my doctoral research structured interviews were conducted with six people, all associated with the left of the labour movement — a former federal Minister with education responsibilities (BP); a senior national official of the Metalworkers Union (RJ); a senior national official of the construction workers union and executive member of the ACTU (SS); the national training officer of the textile workers union (MK); and two training officers with the Trade Union Training Authority (TUTA) (SD and BC). Of the interviewees, four are men and two women.

The paper concentrates on the interviewees' comments on the need to modernise industry and education and training; the nature of the consensus within the labour movement ; and the ideas of strategic advance or defensive reaction.

Modernisation

National training reform has been about the modernisation of work and education. Industry, award and union restructuring has occurred at work and education has been identified as the key to restructuring.

Education is seen as enhancing individual human capital, while for the 'nation' it is a source of economic growth. It is promoted as capable of solving challenges of technological change; a new production environment; internationalisation; and international competitiveness.

Moreover it is seen as being both inevitable and desirable:

> *it just became a conventional wisdom* that economic survival was contingent upon having a workforce that was capable, was flexible, adaptable. ... As economic circumstances change, industries decline and others grow; people need to reskill and I think it just came to be accepted. *(BP) (emphasis added)*

This position was only possible because the union movement supported modernisation as being in the national interest and came to an agreement with the Government and employers. The Accord was the framework that enabled the labour movement to put aside 'sectional' interests in the national interest:

> The ACTU in the '90s, late '80s but particularly in the '90s, developed a common agenda with the key employer bodies on some aspects of a national training system ...
>
> that consensus is tremendously important ... The employer bodies and the ACTU want a national system, they don't want a state system. They do want competency standards, [an] industry training advisory body network which has influence on the system, and a degree of quality assurance in the system. And I reckon it is important for us to preserve that, try and preserve that. (RJ)

Union leaders had been excluded from participating in economic decision making throughout the long period of conservative governments since 1949 but now saw themselves as steering national policy, of at last being in a position to direct work reorganisation:

> restructuring awards...also had the effect of saying this is going to be our vehicle to actually solve the problem of having old divisions of labour, or demarcations, that were out of date. We can actually move from old demarcations that were becoming irrelevant into, through award restructuring, constructing new ones. *(SD)*

Modernising industry and work not only required consensus at senior levels it also needed workers to accept the changes as being in their interests. One of the methods used to transmit this message was achieved by elevating 'Taylorism' to a bogey in order to justify linking union and industry restructuring to modernising production:

> We tied the two things together, rationalisation of the trade union movement with the reform programme which included smashing down the Taylorist demarcation lines and providing upskilling on the job in working hours *(SS)*

At the industry level union officials began to identify their role as being agents of efficiency:

> I sat in as a CIDA (Construction Industry Development Agency — a tripartite body) represent-ative ... it was one of the most exhilarating experiences that I've had in nearly 33 years as a union official. At those meetings there was animated debate between the builders labourer representative and the carpenter representative on the one side and the representative of the architect and the engineers, the engineers who were there and middle management about what? About the most efficient way to do the job. *(SS)*

And in order to modernise industry and production education also needed to be recast to ensure a synergy between work and education:

> It's also important that the training system be modernised, in other words that we move away from the traditional time-based apprenticeships to an entry level training system that is far broader in the sense of providing access or entry to a much broader range of occupations and also to modernise it so that it's not based on time spent in a traineeship or an apprenticeship but is based on the acquisition of recognised competencies *(BP)*
>
> The reform of the education system, the modernisation of education was union business, it's got to be. *(SD)*

The 'conventional wisdom' was reinforced in various government reports. For example, the 1992 Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC) proposed a new national entry level vocational training system:

> 'the training reform agenda is a necessary part of national micro-economic reforms to make Australia more economically competitive. Workplace reform and changes in work organisation are generating demands for a more capable workforce. This reflects technological changes and the need for productivity improvement and quality enhancement' (Carmichael 1992, 19)

Achieving consensus

How did this 'conventional wisdom' develop? There appears to be little understanding of how a consensus was achieved or indeed whether there was a genuine consensus. For some the process is unquestioned:

> I don't think there was any argument about it — the desirability of an improved training system, embedding training in the whole framework of industrial relations making it integral — I don't think those aspects were ever areas of contention. *(BP)*
>
> There was very strong commitment in the trade union movement to the ACTU blueprint ... I think it was a dramatic break from the past *(RJ)*

But for others the process was less straightforward:

> It certainly wasn't an even commitment. There was a substantial minority of people, and some unions even, who rejected the Accord process from day one and stayed outside of it right through. *(SS)*
>
> I think a consensus developed although the process of getting there took a few years and was a very uneven process *(SD)*

While for others the consensus was less of genuine support but one in which union officials felt either unable or unwilling to question the policy, or understood that raising objections was futile.

> I think that there was consensus that it would be a good thing to do because you couldn't argue against the principles of it. As for there being any debate I don't think there was much debate, from memory, because we were swept along with all of this workplace reform and 'wouldn't it be wonderful', I mean I don't think a trade union

> official would dare stand up and speak against it and say this is a load of shit...
>
> And you know the ACTU decided basically, but that's all right. *(MK)*

What is apparent is that only a small group of officials thoroughly discussed these ideas before they were ratified.

> I don't think it was a very widespread discussion. I think it was a discussion amongst some key people that led to the thinking that this should be done and then of course it was discussed much more widely. I think the initial process was, you know, a few key people felt that there was the need for this new strategy ...
>
> The Communist Party within and external to the AMWU, labour left and the rank and file organisations within the AMWU discussed the political implications of those developments very extensively ... studying some of the more interventionist opportunities that come from an Accord, which clearly hadn't been well exploited in the first few years, the idea of discussing those and pulling those out, that came from a few people and was developed *(RJ)*

As a result there was considerable confusion about just what training reform meant. A senior teachers' union official who took responsibility for training national officials about training reform recounted:

> I was sort of allocated to this project and I must confess that in the first instance the training reform agenda just didn't make sense to me, the notion of standards didn't make sense, because it was all very abstract, people kept on talking about standards and I didn't know what they looked like. They kept on talking about competencies and I didn't know what they were talking about *(BC)*

Even within the metalworkers' union, where the programme had its genesis, a national official explains that members are struggling to come to grips with implementing the programme:

> we're now facing a lot of dissatisfaction from our delegates saying this implementation of the standards is too hard, we don't know enough to be able to do this and control this ourselves *(RJ)*

Strategic advance or defensive reaction?

What has been learnt by the officials? Reflecting on the period union officials express a quite different perspective to the overblown optimism of the early 1980s when the programme had to be sold to members. The reform programme is now perceived as both a strategic advance on the part of the union movement and a defensive reaction against the employer's drive to reduce wages and increase labour flexibility and productivity.

> (we) had prepared our officials and delegates for acceptance of a reform programme that the trade union movement at least had a hand on the steering wheel rather than having it imposed on us. *(SS)*
>
> ...the restructuring was driven by globalisation by government policies and by political and ideological agenda of employers as well, so they're driving that, we're responding to that.

Do you think it is a defensive position?

> Oh not completely defensive but I think there is a lot of defence in it for us. And I'm saying if we hadn't intervened in it the way we had the outcomes would have been much worse and its difficult to see an alternative strategy. *(RJ)*

Constant reference is made to the conservative governments in the UK, the USA and New Zealand with their outright attacks on trade unions, workers' living standards and the exclusion of trade unions from tripartite bargaining:

> I think there was also a fairly widespread understanding ... that if the unions didn't make workplace change their business, if they didn't intervene in that process and get some, become players in that process, that workers would suffer greatly and we'd get the US style labour market, and also unions would become irrelevant. So we had to make those issues of workplace change, job reorganisation our business, get involved in that and the skill and training issue was really the key, you know, the key to that involvement. *(RJ)*
>
> we have still been able to hold onto the basics, the basics of our awards system in the latest negotiations initiated by the Howard government to basically dismantle those systems. You can't say the same for example about the USA or Britain or New Zealand and you couldn't even say the same about the Canadian system *(SD)*

In the end, union leaders, after having gained access to Labour Ministers, attained positions on economic planning councils and the Reserve Bank, chaired education reform committees, still see no alternative to the policies they pursued under Labour.

After thirteen years of Labour government balanced against the rhetoric they promoted after 1982 of setting in place a 'new approach', one that would 'challenge the ruling class (and) develop in a socialist direction', all that is left is to say that it could have been worse.

Conclusion

Australian labour's attempts to place itself in the centre of economic modernisation, to substitute itself for employers' 'troglodyte organisations', has not reaped the benefits that its leading proponents advocated fifteen years ago.

Its attempts to chart new policy directions of economic restructuring through national consensus and skill formation has broken down. Other OECD countries have also sought to counter or ameliorate rising unemployment and other features of free market economics with policies such as education and retraining schemes, public works, new export markets and welfare schemes. In most cases, as in Australia, they have been at best temporary band-aids and at worst completely ineffective.

What stands out is the need to re-imagine an alternative, radical political economy, that is to revive a discourse of alternative means of organising society, production, education, and social relations. Neither postmodernist theorists with their world-weary pessimism nor social democratic attempts to achieve national consensus are capable of conceiving alternative economic systems to capitalism. Yet the internationalisation of capital itself explodes the very idea of national compromises between nationally fixed and located classes.

In Australia trade union attempts to modernise industry, work and education in an effort to placate capital have failed even to maintain working-class living standards. We are left to ask whether those within the labour movement who promote the idea of a common national interest are pursuing a futile policy which fails to understand the dynamic of the world economy at the end of the twentieth century?

Even liberal economists such as Lester Thurow in *The future of capitalism* (1996) are extremely worried about the viability of capitalist societies. However, so powerful is liberal ideology that people find it much easier to imagine the end of the world than the far more modest change in the mode of production from capitalism to socialism.

If the labour movement of the post-war period up to the 1970s saw its role in terms of moderating the excesses of the market, extending the public sector's position in the economy and broadening democratic participation in society, it has considerably curtailed its view of what is possible under capitalism in the intervening quarter century.

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The personal and the particular: adult educators, postmodernity and the problem of localised knowledge

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Over the past two decades, adult education both in its theorisations and practice has privileged the use of experience as a learning resource. Adulthood has been theorised as a state of having more experience and adult students as having an enhanced capacity to learn through reflecting on their experiences. There is now a lively debate about the epistemological status of experience which focuses on the discursive construction of experience, and one outcome of this debate has been to render problematic the links between experience and learning.

It is no coincidence that this debate has gathered momentum in the contemporary condition of postmodernity where the intellectual and cultural challenges posed by postmodernist ideas have foregrounded the significance of epistemological issues. One aspect of postmodernity as a socio-cultural condition, characterised by globalisation and the information-communications revolution is a 'disembeddedness' or undermining of certainties and hitherto secure foundations, including those asserted by disciplinary knowledge and epistemology as a guarantor and boundary-maintainer of that knowledge. Globalisation overturns universalism and instead emphasises 'particularity, localism and difference which generate a sense of the limits of culturally unifying, ordering and integrating projects' (Featherstone 1995, 114). Education in postmodernity becomes increasingly based on specific cultural contexts, on localised and particularised knowledge and the valuing of a multiplicity of experience (Usher and Edwards 1994).

Postmodernism has been defined as an attitude of incredulity towards 'grand narratives' (Lyotard 1984) or universal stories which do not recognise themselves as stories but unproblematic givens. It is important here to emphasise the 'incredulity' — universal stories are not so much rejected, rather they can no longer be taken on trust. One reason for this is that they have proved themselves to be oppressive and exclusive, totalising and potentially totalitarian. In postmodernism, it is their status as *discourses* rather than 'truth' which is highlighted and it is this emphasis which allows a foregrounding of their enmeshment in the operations of power, for example in their elevation of scientific knowledge and downgrading of practitioner knowledge. We now have to ask of these stories — who is speaking them?; what power does speaking these discourses confer?; who is being excluded as a consequence? Epistemology can itself be conceptualised as a discourse — a discourse about the warranting of knowledge which works through a simultaneous process of exclusion and inclusion. In this way, a standard or a set of rules is discursively constructed about the nature of the knowing self, about what constitutes knowledge, and about the appropriate methods and procedures for warranting knowledge claims. For our purposes, the main characteristics of these rules are their universality and impersonality. Universality or generality is dichotomously opposed to particularity, and impersonality or objectivity to the personal and the subjective. Here then we find pairs of binary opposites which structure the way knowledge and knowledge production or research is conceived and validated. As a consequence, what becomes dispriviledged and marginalised is local knowledge, the personal and the particular.

The postmodern context of a renewed interest in the local, the personal and the particular where the notion of secure foundations is questioned seems, on the face of it, to warrant the use of the anecdotal or personal narratives in making experientially-based knowledge claims. As we have seen, postmodernism has questioned the criterion of universality, a universal standard or set of rules, in judging such claims. This places adult educators in a troublingly paradoxical situation. One can acknowledge the force of the postmodern critique, especially as this resonates with traditions such as giving voice, acknowledging difference, and recognising the operations of power. On the other hand, it is difficult for adult educators to act 'postmodernistically' and go beyond the boundaries set by conventional epistemology. In supporting the learning of adults, we can accept the place of experience as local and particularistic, yet adult educators are also implicated in a discourse which forces them to discriminate between, and thus exclude or include, different claims originating in individual or collective experiences. In short, experience as local, personal and particular seems to somehow need both affirming and transcending at the same time. We both value and devalue experience.

This paper presents the authors' reflections on two case examples involving the development of professional adult educators through postgraduate teaching — specifically through a reflexive classroom practice that foregrounds the problem of the local, the personal and the particular. Each case presents learners as contextualised selves who make personal judgements yet must do so in the light of transpersonal standards and decision rules. The first case problematises the writing of the self into the research text and introduces the idea of a 'learning trajectory' which incorporates the development of a reflexive understanding by the researcher working in a context where there is a requirement to produce warranted knowledge. The second case illustrates how sets of apparently impersonal rules are rendered problematic in particular instances through different interpretations or local knowledge. It is important to recognise that both reported examples were originally conceived as addressing practical problems in curriculum development in adult education — respectively, i) how to exemplify action research within a postgraduate research training programme, and ii) how to reflect on the operation of rules in practice situations. The examples have been re-cast to illustrate the 'problems' faced by localised knowledge and personal experience in the context of transcendent standards (methods and rules).

Example 1: the research trajectory; situating the self

How do adult education research students make sense of the research process, especially in the context of the requirement to produce acceptable dissertations and theses? On the basis of our work with research trainees over a number of years, we have identified (Usher, Bryant and Johnston 1997) two distinct yet practically related dimensions to the conduct of research which need to be unpacked. Each illustrates a particular aspect of the overall 'trajectory' along which investigators as sense-making selves travel during the course of their enquiries. The first, which is given the greatest emphasis in conventional research training programmes, is the *technical* dimension; this relates to the formalities of design, data collection, theory generation and analysis, and reporting. Students are quite properly concerned with such technical matters, yet in the process of addressing them they provide evidence of the importance of a second, *experiential* dimension in the *practice* of research which is significant for them personally as researchers but which is given little recognition in formal descriptions of the research process. This is the domain of the local and the particular where situational contingencies both internal and external to the research itself, as well as the personal dispositions of researchers, come into play. We view one of the main problems of assisting researchers who are differently situated and disposed individuals as that of producing an 'acceptable' text of their enquiries, i.e. one which 'works' both for themselves and their readers. In this sense we would not wish to separate research *training* from research *supervision*. Where there is a separation, the former often becomes little more than an induction into methodological prescriptions which reproduces a technical-rationality model of research, methods as an algorithmic selection of means to satisfy the ends of enquiry. The writing of a research text which downgrades or even ignores the experiential dimension becomes in effect an exercise in the construction of a particular kind of self, an abstracted reasoning machine, that adult education students find dissatisfying.

One of the benefits of the postmodern turn to thinking about research as a reflexive practice which privileges the 'local' is that it can incorporate the experiential dimensions of situatedness and affect by attending to the narrativity of research (Atkinson, 1990; Ricoeur 1991; Schratz and Walker 1995). This emphasises that the research text is a story that constructs a world where the researcher is part, although not necessarily the 'author', of the story. The narrativity and textuality of research can be contrasted with the conventional notions of research as a technical, abstracted process where scientific method is assumed to be the universal standard.

Mapping situatedness and affect into a research trajectory allows us, as Schneider (1988, 81) notes, to engage practically with the experiential questions which are intimately inter-related to the technical aspects of conducting an investigation. The researcher can now ask: 'Which highlights are there?', What has bored me, made me excited, irritated, frustrated, enjoyed, hurt and why?, 'Which theories can I make friends with?', 'How do I select appropriately, where do I get lost?', etc. The case example is intended to demonstrate that scripting oneself as an *a*ffective researcher can assist in becoming an *e*ffective researcher especially in a reflective practice context, and that dealing with the textuality of research evidence gives a vital interrogative and critical handle on the surface data of practice.

One of the present authors teaches an elective course within his faculty's research training programme entitled 'Action Research and Reflective Practice'. Reflecting on his own rather disappointing first experience in attempting to convey what action research was all about by initially having students consult the literature in this area, he recognised a contradictory attempt to introduce the idea of action research by trying to get students to respond to someone else's text rather than engage directly in action and produce a text of their own. The problem was re-defined as how to establish the conditions for 'real' action research within the confines of the classroom and timetable. At the same time, he was aware that the research students — fifteen in all, of both sexes, different ages, and from different cultures — swapped stories and talked informally among themselves outside the class about their research, including how they were feeling about the particular stage that each had reached (the students were at various stages on the trajectory).

At the next class, the teacher made no announcement that he was going to engage the students in some action research, but invited the class to divide into three groups of five students each. He then handed all the students in each group a small blank card. Then he asked each individual to write *one word only* that best described her/his current feelings about doing research at the stage they were then at (whether just beginning, or some way along the trajectory). Each group of five cards was then collected, shuffled, and handed back to members of the same group, ensuring that nobody received their own card. Each student then read aloud the word on the swapped card and gave their own interpretation to the group of what it meant. That interpretation was then checked against what the author of the word had meant, after which others were invited to comment, and so on around the group. Each group then reported to the class as a whole on what it had discovered about the way its members felt about doing research; each of these reports incorporated local experiences which had given rise to particular understandings. A list of personal feelings and their meanings was then compiled, for review by the whole class. The class had generated data, collaboratively explored its meaning, and suggested further lines of inquiry to follow (in this case, were the affective responses and/or their interpretations cultured or gendered, and if so how?)

The act of writing, and the subsequent exchange of comments on the 'text', helped to authenticate each student's experience through unfolding personal stories (for example, about how and why they came to be doing research) in the context of others doing the same. The opportunity for shared comment (which in principle could be available to build another text) extended the limits of participants' understanding about the role of feelings in research and how these related to the formal requirements of an investigation and its reporting. Voice and action are co-implicated in this exercise; participants were empowered through ownership of the processes of writing, reading and exchanging their experiences. The groups and the class as a whole began to develop a constructively critical edge which questioned the given-ness of experience by looking at a number of alternative ways in which different experiences could be rendered.

A number of features of this exercise are worthy of note:

1. The validation of personal experience proceeds through an exchange of particulars in conversation, and not with reference to abstract standards, yet ...
2. the personal concerns of researchers are embedded in beliefs about such standards, i.e. in what are taken to be methodological requirements for successful research, however ...
3. these concerns cannot be adequately addressed solely by attending to questions of 'method' as such, i.e. as transcendent standards, therefore ...
4. 'methods' need to be viewed as procedural particulars which are situationally (and dispositionally) appropriate rather than as universal remedies for research problems.

Example 2: applying rules to cases; an exercise in reflective practice

Donald Schön (1983, 1987) offers a powerful critique of the technical-rationality model of practice and an argument for the process of reflection-in-action by means of case examples which most reflective practitioners generally accept. Yet there are two important dimensions of practice which Schön neglects to consider: these are, a) the discursive formation and textuality of practice, and b) the fact that practices are conducted with reference to *rules*. We have argued (Usher, Bryant and Johnston 1997) that Schön demonstrates an absence of reflexivity in his own writings which, for all their questioning of conventional methodologies, do not draw attention to themselves as *texts* in the production of supporting transcript evidence and commentary. We have drawn attention to the authored and authoring nature of the self as a researcher in our own first example. Here, we consider the nature of rules by describing and commenting on an exercise used with Masters students.

The exercise follows closely one provided by Adrian Furnham (Furnham 1988, 180-81) in his examination of lay attribution theory in processes of legal reasoning. In the first part of this exercise, a small group of students was presented with a set of short event descriptions and were given one week to decide on their own whether the events as described constituted, in some cases 'murder' and in others 'negligence', according to sets of specific rules which they were also given and which they were asked to apply as they thought appropriate. Having made their initial decisions, the group then met to discuss each case and the participants' reasoning processes. The exercise was conceived as a problematic in the use of rules, and as one initially removed as far as possible from students' own teaching concerns. The rationale that was given was that any practice involves the 'making of cases' by describing situations and subsuming them under rules, so that one of the ways in which one can begin to unpack practice in a reflective sense is to examine how judgements under rules are actually made.

According to Schauer, rules 'speak to *types* and not to particulars' (Schauer 1991, 18). They also exhibit an 'open texture [and] ... ineradicable contingency' (ibid, 36). Here then was an opportunity for students to demonstrate these qualities of rules in their case-by-case discussions. The first judgmental problem was in deciding whether particular events were indeed instances of a general type as given by the rules. The second was in ascertaining what the rules *actually meant* in order that their possible application to the case in hand could be considered. Individual decisions were debated in which it quickly became apparent that none of the descriptions of the cases was clear cut. All participants introduced hypothetical local variations to each set of events; this complicated the process of trying to reach a consensus about the events themselves, before even examining what was stated or might have been intended by a particular rule. It was interesting to discover that the sources of these variations were threefold:

- what appeared to resonate with 'common sense' and a 'basic understanding of certain situations'
- what an individual's 'personal stance' regarding the events would be (regardless of what the rules appeared to say)
- what it would be reasonable to infer by 'filling the gaps' in what was actually known about each case.

Each source of variation was illustrated by drawing on local experiences and anecdotes in the ensuing discussion. Though they may have appeared to be remote from the case in hand, they helped to inform the tacit understandings and values in the judgements actually offered. It quickly became clear that it was not possible to have a discussion at all without being able to make use of these resources, which effectively was the local knowledge brought to the cases. We draw from this our own 'rule', i.e. that the local and the universal, the particular and the general, are always co-implicated and it is this which makes the subsumption of events under rules possible. What was happening here was not a matter of addressing the personal whilst ignoring the rule. On the contrary, the personal emerged through addressing the application of the rule in particular contexts, just as vice versa the rule became concrete through deploying the personal.

The group was then invited to consider the experiential value of negotiating the applicability of rules in these somewhat 'artificial' cases, to 'real' cases in their own teaching practice. Prior discussion had demonstrated that the meaning of events and rules was not transparently given in the text, but required the reading of those bringing their own situated understandings to bear. This is true of any text and any practice. Participants told stories of how they had interpreted or evaded formal institutional rules which were supposed to govern their own practice, for example in recording class attendance or fulfilling a range of other specific administrative requirements, rules which demonstrated their ill-fitting nature as generalisations intended to cover all cases. The stories provide evidence of what Schauer usefully describes as *recalcitrant experiences*, defined as 'events that call into question in particular cases the generalisations [framed by rules] that usually serve us quite well' (Schauer 1991, 39). It is in the plastic arena of conversational discourse, with its qualifiers and exceptions to rules, that recognition is afforded to the personal and particular in judgements concerning the applicability of rules in given instances, and where therefore rules are *actualised*. Given this, local knowledge is a requisite for the sense-making needed in the use of any rules.

Displacing hierarchies

Derrida (1988) has argued that 'objectivity' in the scientific sense is contextually located even though it does not seem so because it is part of a discourse that is powerfully established. In this sense, objectivity is always an achievement whose particular meaning is constituted within particular research contexts. It needs the particular to be realised as an apparent universal. This necessary contextuality means that the universal and the personal cannot be separated from the local and the particular. That they should be seen as separated or separable is therefore a matter of power rather than of logic or truth.

Our case examples demonstrate this very clearly. In the first case, the technical and experiential dimensions of research revealed themselves to be co-implicated. The problem, which the exercise helped to resolve, lay in the discomfort felt by practitioner-researchers at being forced into a scientific discourse emphasising only the technical dimension and repressing the everyday discourse of the local, the personal and the particular which the contextuality of any research introduces. In the second case, as we have already noted, the rules could not be actualised and the sense-making process required could not get under way without the deployment of local knowledge and the mutually interactive addressing of the personal and the particular with the impersonal and the general.

Ultimately, any process that deconstructs the binary oppositions displaces hierarchy and demonstrates the significance of their co-implication. When the universality of scientific discourse is made problematic, when knowledge is seen as always relative to the local situation of those producing it (Sassower 1995), a political dimension comes into play. Emphasising the local, the personal and the particular challenges the deeply embedded notion of the 'modest witness' of Western science (Haraway 1997) — the scientific researcher whose accounts simply mirror reality, who inhabits no culture, and whose situated embodiment has to be ignored.

The research process is constituted by everyday conversational discourse as well as technical scientific discourse. The problem of relating the personal to the transpersonal is not one that occurs in the former discourse but arises only when the latter is accorded a monopolistic position. When the narrativity and textuality of research is recognised and given its due place, what emerges is not just a more satisfactory way of doing research but a political act that challenges powerful and oppressive epistemological hierarchies.

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Challenging metrocentrism: issues of equity in vocational education and training for rural and remote Australians

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Australia's responses to shifts in global economic power and privilege, and the rapid changes in information technologies in the 1980s driven primarily by the 'crisis' in capitalism, positioned the nation on a rapid trajectory into globalisation. This shift was informed by economic rationalism, and processes of deregulation (Hinkson 1996, 202). In Australia, the crisis was discursively promoted in terms of productivity, competition and profitability (Watkins 1994, 9). The need for a 'brain-based' recovery (Hinkson 1996, 206), associated with industry and award restructuring, flexibility and multi skilling was embraced as a major platform to reposition Australia as skilled and globally competitive. As in other OECD countries, Australia invested heavily in the (re)emergence of a 'new' vocalisation in education, developing education markets, and conjoining education, industry and work (Butler 1997).

Central to this agenda of major reform, and supported by an uneasy alliance framed as 'consensual' politics between the state, and élites from industry and the labour movement, was the establishment of a national vocational education and training system based on major aims:

- to provide an educated, skilled and flexible workforce to enable Australian industry to be competitive in domestic and international markets, and
- to improve the knowledge, skills and quality of life for Australians, having regard to the particular needs of disadvantaged groups (ANTA 1994a).

Although these aims encapsulate both the economic and the social, and place equity (disadvantaged groups) on the agenda, the dominant discourses that inform the system are firmly located within the economic. Thus, for those seeking to enhance the social, the task is contestation of the narrow economistic readings and enactment of vocational education and training (VET) policies, provision and practices. This paper which is based on a major research project (Butler and Lawrence 1996) focuses on struggles around equity, and disadvantage in relation to the category rural and remote.[1] The discursive approaches to equity invoked through VET policy, to contain and manage difference through category politics are central to this contestation.

Equality, equity and category politics

Within the state, equality is a process of equalising voices of those who represent respectively both established policy and the emancipatory movement (Yeatman 1993, 235). Yeatman argues further that:

> equality exists only within the relationship of political contestation, where those who are excluded by established policy both show its bias *and* make a claim on a prospectively more inclusive policy (1993, 235).

Almost a third of Australians live in rural or remote Australia, contributing to the economic, social and cultural development of their local communities, and to that of the nation[2]. Australia has a history of regarding rural and remote as peripheral, a hinterland, despite its romanticisation in our mythology. This positioning perpetuates a core/ periphery perspective that is often incorporated into policy and planning. Data illustrate that planning for VET is developed not only from large city locations, but also from an urban perspective.

Such marginalisation at policy level results in a plethora of issues and difficulties[3] that impact on the day to day lives of rural and remote Australians endeavouring to achieve equitable provision of and access to services taken for granted in urban areas, including VET. The term metrocentrism is used to capture this phenomena.

Overwhelmingly, for non urban Australians, the struggles for equality in vocational training are framed as challenges to practices associated with metrocentrism within VET policy and planning. A plethora of reports illustrate the same range of issues and concerns, with overt statements pointing to the lack of political will to implement such findings.

Striving for equality then is striving to equalise the voices between those who establish and enact the (metrocentric) VET policy, and the Other/s captured within the category 'rural and remote'. The VET policy approach to include (emancipatory) voice is that of 'access and equity', firmly based on a distributive rather than substantive notion of justice (Butler 1996). Within this approach, certain groups that constitute well over 60% of the population are classified as disadvantaged.

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[1] This national research project investigates issues associated with access and equity within VET for people in rural and remote Australia was commissioned by ANTA, to inform national VET planning and policies.

[2] Rural areas are defined as non-metropolitan zones and include statistical local areas with urban centre populations of between 5,000 and 100,000. These are further categorised as large rural centres, small rural centres and other rural areas. Remote zones are statistical local areas with urban centre populations of less than 5,000 people (DPIE 1991).

[3] The research identified 78 key issues, discussed under four major headings: location, learning, culture, local ownership; access and transitions; curriculum and delivery; and provision: structures and systems. (Butler and Lawrence 1996)

Foucault (1977) describes the use of classificatory systems as 'the art of distribution', to establish presences and absences, to know how and where to locate individuals (1977, 143). The art of distribution rests on three techniques for sorting and ordering — 'enclosure', 'partitioning' and then 'ranking'. Townley (1994, 25-51) interprets this as 'dividing practices'. In this way the categorised groups identified as 'equity', 'disadvantaged', 'target' are further segregated into categories associated with specific differences. This categorisation both allows for shielding of the 'norm' and its advantageous status and rewards from public scrutiny, and acts as an organising principle through which equity can be 'distributed', in order of perceived or constructed needs, ideology and political expediency (Butler 1996).

Within the ANTA Access and Equity Policy (ANTA 1994b), those viewed as equity or target groups include women; Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders; those with disability; from non-English speaking backgrounds; unemployed persons; those without adequate English language, literacy and numeracy skills; and people from rural and remote backgrounds. Moreover, new 'target' groups continue to emerge, providing a map of political interests and emerging discourses of need (youth, blue collar male workers, the technological 'poor').

The use of target groups raises a number of issues:

- within a framework of distributive justice, target groups inevitably find themselves in competition with each other, both for access to resources, and for prioritising on a hierarchical ladder of 'need';
- there is a tendency for target groups to be represented as homogeneous, disguising the diversity and heterogeneity within each category;
- individuals (and groups) are often represented in more than one target group, and thus experience multiple or compound disadvantage;
- while it can be argued that the use of disadvantaged groups as a mechanism for distributing justice is part (but not all) of the answer, advantage is neither discussed nor analysed.

Rather than equity being an organising principle, the planning approach utilised in the establishment of the national VET system favoured the 'add-but-don't-stir' approach: 'first get the system right and equity will follow' (Butler 1997). Equity is managed through one of four organising themes — that of improved access. Analyses of the discursive framings and shifts in relation to equity during the short but frantic history of the new system identify a number of approaches to 'managing' equity; — equity as patronage; as access; as effectiveness and efficiency; as quality; and now as user choice (Butler 1997; 1996). The present alignment of equity with 'user choice' is of considerable concern. The 'clients' of the VET system are defined by the state as industry and enterprise, thus further marginalising learners, weakening the idea of target groups and obscuring equity (Taylor and Henry 1996).

Issues of power are silenced. Industry is assumed to be benevolent; learners are assumed to have access to industry. The needs of industry/enterprise are assumed to be congruent with those of learners. Learners are assumed to be individuals positioned as ready and able to engage in contractual negotiations with a 'system'. For those located within 'rural and remote', the concept of user choice is deeply problematic, as is its inherent association with the competitive training 'market', and all that the latter infers. In summary, the discursive approach to equity engaged in and by VET is that of 'category politics' — framed by Bacchi (1996, 2) as 'the deployment of categories for political uses'.

'Rural and remote', vocational education and training, and equity

Vocational education and training goes to the heart of rural development, integrating regional-community, economic-social, citizens-enterprises/industry. It also has the potential to link the local with the national and global, in the proactive intent to take Australia into the next century as an energetic, sustainable and productive nation.

Six key goals have been identified for rural economic and social development (Sher and Rowe Sher 1994, 21-23, 27): a growing population base; an equitable share of the rewards derived from rural resources to be reaped by rural people and communities; a growing and diversifying rural economic base; a growing rural employment base; improved quality of rural life; and stronger, more cohesive rural communities. Education is identified as both 'the necessary precondition and the primary enabling strategy' with this endeavour.

Despite the homogenising power of category 'rural and remote', the populations in such areas are diverse and include each and all of the named and emergent target groups. The demographic characteristics of people living in rural and remote parts of Australia differ from the characteristics of the 63% of the population living in urban locations. The major differences are in the composition of the population: different age structure, a higher proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, lower proportion of people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and a slightly different gender balance. The high proportion of under 14 year old Australians living in rural and remote areas is of significance for planning future VET provision. Finally, there is a difference in post-compulsory education experience.

The construction of a national training system based on discourses of (economic) globalisation and designed from a 'urban as centre' standpoint connects global-nation-state-local-rural/remote to a complex web of often contradictory relationships. While the connecting of rural/remote with global can be perceived as advantageous, people from rural and remote communities face disadvantage both in accessing and in achieving positive outcomes from vocational education and training because of their distance from the 'metropolitan norm'. This 'distance' is not determined by and cannot be measured by geographical indicators alone, although it is clear that geographic distance poses specific problems in regard to consultation and delivery. Rather, the distance is determined by VET strategies that are developed from a 'urban as norm' perspective that marginalise and/or exclude non-metropolitan perspectives and realities. However, it is also argued that one of the effects of globalising activities is the enhancing of the local (for example, Gare 1995; Sklair 1995). Through a national/global approach to VET then, opportunities exist for rural and remote communities. Increasingly, there is a move towards connecting community and region through the mechanism of regionalisation in vocational education and training. This has the potential for both positive and negative outcomes, depending on the devolvement of decision-making processes, and most significantly, resources including the proximity of infrastructure and development funds/resources, to support communities and their regions.

Vocational education and training delivers both economic and social benefits to individuals, industries, communities, regions and the nation. It has the potential to occupy a significant and enabling central position in community and regional economic and social development, in rural and remote Australia. The co-joining of corporate (industry/economic/market) discourses with those of community and communalism is indeed contested terrain, where policies and processes will require careful and expert negotiation between all parties involved, if outcomes are to be of mutual benefit.

Category politics and 'rural and remote'

There is a complex range of issues which need to be addressed in relation to the ability of people living in rural and remote Australia to access training equitably. These go to matters of isolation, socio-economic status, race and cultural background, and the ownership and control of training provision (Jane/NWWA 1996, 2). Many people living in rural and remote Australia, by their categorisation and sub-categorisation, experience what Daley (1992) describes as compound disadvantage. Such difference/s are concealed within category politics. The following provides a partial glimpse of the complexity:

The position of **Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islanders**, many of whom live in rural and remote communities, is deeply problematic. Principles established through the National Review of Education for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples are those of: self determination, diversity subsidiarity, affiliation and efficiency. (Yunipinga *et al.* 1994). In 1989, all governments in Australia acknowledged the National Aboriginal Education Policy Joint Policy Statement that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's under-representation in VET requires urgent action to achieve indigenous involvement in educational decision-making; equality of access, equity of participation and equitable and appropriate outcomes.

Drawing on the work of Nagi Binanga (1994), the training needs of indigenous people have often been determined by authorities and individuals who have not identified with the issues, opinions and needs of indigenous people. Training products offered to Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, are often based on programs developed for delivery in a combination of industrial workplaces and Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges. As many remote or rural communities cannot access TAFE colleges or industrial workplaces, the value of such training programs is highly compromised.

A case study in a remote central Australian community identifies the need for VET to develop both communities and individuals and the need to broaden concepts of industry and training (Sanguinetti in Butler and Lawrence 1996, 57-62). Funding is an issue for provision of VET on outstations and in small communities, as it is for the continuation of successful projects. Mechanisms are required for enhanced co-ordination between Commonwealth, State and local stakeholders. Finally, most significantly, all issues relating to VET for indigenous Australians are located within the framework of self determination.

Among the issues relating to **women** is the 'ill defined, under valued and often trivialised' contributions that rural women make to their families, communities, and rural/farming 'small businesses' through their labour (Alston 1994, 379). Moreover, given the recent rural recession, many rural women are seeking paid work, to supplement family incomes and for the survival of their farms.

Great emphasis is placed by rural women's groups, on access to both employment and education and training opportunities, that are relevant, accessible and affordable. The fractured and fragmented nature of off-the-farm work, the desire to undertake agriculture related courses, the need to balance off-the-farm, on-the-farm and domestic work, and the need for child care all require consideration. Training opportunities for rural women must account for the realities in their lives.

Information relating to **people with a disability** seeking to access vocational education and training in rural and remote Australia is striking in its very absence. While labour force data (NBEET 1994) indicate the participation of people with disability in industries perceived as 'rural', little if any specific mention is made of the experiences or needs of this group.

As the proportion of **people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds** living in rural and remote Australia is low in comparison with urban areas, people who associate with the category 'non-English speaking background' find themselves very much in a minority.

Little research is directed to investigating VET issues for such people living in rural and remote Australia. While sharing issues of concern common to most non-English speaking background people, or to rural and remote communities , cultural differences and lack of specific support services pose extra dilemmas. Added to this are factors of cultural/psychological isolation. Research in rural New South Wales confirms these trends and also identifies that isolation, media misrepresentation, racism, unemployment, limited or no access to English classes, lack of support services for women are major concerns (ANESBWA 1996).

In summary, the experiences of, and issues facing rural and remote Australians who also fit the criteria for other equity target groups illustrates the complexity of issues that need to be addressed, in the equitable provision of VET. To date, metrocentric VET policy frameworks are inadequate to cater for these diverse needs. The use of category politics to simplify this complexity, and manage equity rhetorically and from a distance can be seen as part of the problem, not the answer.

Devolved (regional/local) decision making and resource allocation within a national framework could go some way to increasing flexibility, and relevance of provision. The challenge is to shift the limiting framework to one that enables rural/remote stakeholders to work collaboratively, on an inter-sectoral basis to ensure that programs reflect and contribute to rural/regional economic, social and cultural goals, as well as accommodating those of the nation. Such a shift requires a revisioning of rural and remote from a deficit/disadvantage model to a forward looking perspective of rural enterprise and entrepreneurship.

In conclusion

Equity of access, participation and outcomes is core business of a publicly funded vocational education and training system. However, the social/local cannot be subsumed by the economic. Any national strategy for equity in rural and remote vocational education and training must take into account the complexity and diversity of non-metropolitan Australia and specific issues experienced by rural and remote citizens, such as the impact of location issues around cost, lack of access to a range of employment and education opportunities, and compound disadvantage experienced by specific target groups.

There is an urgent need to implement an overarching national VET strategy for rural and remote Australia, that is integrated with and supports other policies related to regional and rural economic and social development. While such a strategy needs to ensure that people living and working in non-metropolitan Australia have access to 'mainstream' provision of public services including vocational education and training, the circumstances of their locations and lives must be central in any such strategy, as must their aspirations.

As asserted Butler and Lawrence (1996, 34), the inclusion of rural and remote Australia into national policies and delivery strategies is a matter of equity. Given the significance of rural and remote Australia, and the contributions of the people who live there to the economic, social, environmental and intellectual capital of Australia, this is also a matter of national equity.

It is time to move beyond metrocentrism, in the provision of vocational education and training, in and for all rural and remote Australians.

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Life at the glass ceiling: women in mid-level management positions

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We began with the glass ceiling, the boundary which most women are rarely able to negotiate in leadership positions in adult education and related fields. Therefore, it seemed a logical place for us to begin if we wanted to know more about women in leadership. While there has been some serious speculation about how women lead at this mid-leadership level and in organisations in general, empirical research has been limited. Instead, the majority of work on women leaders has been descriptions of or prescriptions for practice (for example, Caffarella 1992, Fagenson 1993, Snyder 1993, Perreault 1996). This has resulted in many 'ought to's' or 'shoulds' being adopted by those who have advocated advancement for women in leadership positions. Furthermore, much of the data-based research has been exploratory studies of those few women who make it to senior level positions (for example, Astin and Leland 1990, Bierema 1994, Helgesen 1990). The purpose of this study was to learn how women currently in mid-level positions, those who work just under the glass ceiling, understood themselves as leaders. We focused on women's perceptions of how they work as leaders, their career paths, the impact of careers on their personal lives, and their understanding of the role of gender in their careers. Through hearing the stories of these women we hoped to better understand the boundary within which they have either chosen or been forced to remain.

Methodology

A qualitative research design was used and the research was conducted by a team of people who all had a mutual interest in gaining a deeper understanding about 'women's ways of leading'. The data collection and initial analysis were conducted by the whole team, with the final analysis, using the constant comparative method, completed jointly by two members of the group. A total of 23 women drawn from three contexts (educational organisations, both public and private; corporate organisations; and religious ministry) were interviewed in-depth for this study. The majority of these women were white, except for two Hispanic-Americans and three African-Americans, and in their late thirties to mid forties. Both married and single women were included.

Findings

Our study yielded an interesting picture of life at the glass ceiling for women in mid-level leadership positions. *First*, if there is one characteristic of mid-level women leaders it is their perception of their leadership style as sensitive and responsive, especially to the people with whom they work. They want to involve their people and use various terms to describe this — being collaborative, consensus — building, facilitative, team-building, and participatory. An executive in human resources expressed it directly:

> I have learned to be part of a group. As much as a driver that I am, I also think that I have realised that I need to be very versatile to other people's styles ... I can work on that versatility by being in consensus. You can't shove ideas down people's throats, you have to work subtly. You don't have to manipulate people, but you have to know their styles, know the way they operate. Assess them and then respond accordingly. You can't just treat every person the same.

In their focus on the people aspect of leadership, an important component of their work is 'to bring out the best in people', to make them feel important and useful.

As well as being responsive and sensitive to others, these leaders also spoke about the need to be aware and adaptable to the changing context in which they worked. Many spoke of the rather complex calculations they make in responding to the ever changing equation of the situation, the task, and the people in their environments. In addition, these women leaders made decisions is in accord with a context-sensitive leadership style, but in two different ways. Some balanced an analytical thought process with a participative mode of gathering information; even more balanced analysis with intuition.

Second, it is generally assumed that most women follow a nonlinear career path, largely because they bear primary responsibility for family and child-care needs. We were surprised to discover that our findings did not support this view. Almost twice as many of our women described their career path as linear. Most of these were single women. Of those who were married, most characterised their spouse as particularly supportive. And of the remaining women with linear career paths, several acknowledged that they had sacrificed their marriages for their careers. For the women in our study, being single or having an egalitarian marriage was usually necessary if they wanted to give their careers priority.

As the women discussed the details of their career development, we discerned an interesting pattern: all described an experience or cluster of experiences that contributed significantly to their development of self-confidence. For most this meant childhood experiences, usually within their families; for others the critical experiences came later and were usually job-related. Self-confidence was also engendered by experiences later in life, usually related to work, and it seems to involve other people having confidence in them. A senior account executive speaks to this point:

> I obviously have been to leadership training courses and all that, but the biggest influence has been with the people I've worked with and spent time with who have let me know that they have confidence in me, that they think I can pull it off. That's a self-fulfilling prophecy. If someone else thinks you can do something, many times you think you can do it, too.

A critical factor in ensuring women's career advancement is the lack of barriers in getting over the glass ceiling. Thus, we asked our women to describe the barriers that they have encountered in their careers, and while they named a variety of things, almost all of them could be categorised as experiences of gender-based discrimination. For them the single greatest barrier was the systematic devaluation of women in our society. This experience took several forms. The most dramatic, of course, were experiences of outright discrimination based on gender. One of our university administrators shared a blatant example:

> What really kind of precipitated my leaving the job...is that I came in and hit the road running and did well. In my last review I had before I left there, I remember my boss saying, 'It's too bad you're a woman because otherwise you'd be ready to move up in the organisation now'.

Sometimes the discrimination from men was less overt but nonetheless clear. A number of women spoke of not being taken seriously by men, of being discounted, and, therefore, needing to assert themselves to be heard. Many agreed with a corporate consultant who said: 'As a woman, I found out I always had to work harder, longer, and I've always had to confront situations in order to get what I need. It's never been handed over and I've always had to pursue it'.

Given the significance of these barriers to career advancement, we were curious about what goals these women held. It was interesting that only three of the women we studied expressed any desire for further advancement. More striking was the large number of women who expressed contentment with the jobs they currently had: 'I'm pretty happy where I am'; 'I really enjoy this position'; '...as long as I continue to be challenged in what I'm doing, I'll probably stay and keep doing it'.

Third, these women often pay a significant personal price for their leadership roles. All spoke about their efforts to balance their professional and personal lives. Everyone, whether married or single, work hard at achieving this balance. A college administrator outlines the difficulties:

> It's hard to separate personal and professional life, it really is, and especially when you live in a small community and the people that you are friends with are a part of where you work ... I think if anything suffers, it's your personal life. As a woman you have to sometimes do more to prove yourself and so you find yourself putting in more hours and doing more things than maybe you would as a man.

Many coped by separating or compartmentalising their professional and personal lives. Others did not identify a specific strategy but spoke of an on-going and often unresolved tension between the two realms.

A number of the women we spoke to described the significant personal cost they paid in their careers. It was in this area that we heard some particularly haunting stories. One of the university administrators described a recent dinner with friends:

> We had two couples over last week and one of the other women is also a leader on campus. During the course of the conversation, she would say, 'Well, that was back when I had a real life'. She said that about three or four times over the course of the evening. I could identify with what she was saying because that's one of the things about leadership and administrative positions — they will absorb all your available time ... Part of my reasoning for not wanting to be a president or some visible leader like that is because I feel like they pay an even higher personal toll.

This concept of cost was also found in the stories of the single women in our study. All spoke of their personal lives being squeezed by their careers, and all sought ways to defend against that. One woman routinely made appointments with herself so that she could exercise to help handle her stress. Another, when necessary, gave herself permission to take time off for herself: 'I've been known to take an hour or two out of a work day and just go take a walk or whatever, just to clear the head....'

Those married women in our study who were more successful in balancing their professional and personal lives usually had a key resource — a supportive spouse. But it was the rare woman who had an easy time seeking a balance; it was an on-going challenge for everyone. While the women do experience increased self-esteem from being in leadership roles, they also pay a significant personal cost for their professional success.

And *fourth*, we found remarkably little gender awareness among our women. Despite the fact that they had earlier experiences of gender discrimination, most failed to see a sustained pattern of discrimination for themselves or for other women. It is as if they uncritically accepted these experiences as simply 'the way things are' and see their own negative experiences as merely 'the cost of doing business'.

We tried to assess the degree of gender-consciousness in a number of ways. One was to ask if they thought being a woman was advantageous for their careers. The various interpretations of this question were probably more revealing than the substance of the answers. A few interpreted it as asking whether or not women had a placement edge because of affirmative action, and they admitted that they did. Each was quick to argue, however, that she was hired for her professional capabilities, not her gender. Most of the women answered in terms of the feminine qualities that women are assumed to bring to their professional roles, such as empathetic listening, sensitivity, and conscientiousness.

Only two of the women we interviewed said that it was disadvantageous because of the inequitable treatment of women. Yet almost all the women had earlier given stories of gender-based discrimination when asked what obstacles or barriers they had faced in their careers. Significantly, though, many of those stories were not explained in terms of gender. For example, one of the human resource executives we interviewed said that her biggest obstacle was 'not being able to prove myself' when she first joined the firm. But she blames it not on her gender, but on the fact that she was viewed as an extension of the men with whom she worked.

Those women who did connect career obstacles to their gender often would downplay its overall significance. It was as if they saw experiences of gender discrimination as single events, not as evidence of a systematic pattern of discrimination against women to keep them in marginal roles. For example, recall the university administrator who early in her career was told 'It's too bad you're a woman because you'd be ready to move up in the organisation now'. When asked what it meant to be a woman in leadership, she discounted gender as a factor at all: 'The gender thing doesn't really enter into it'.

Coming at the issue of gender from another direction, we asked our participants if they saw themselves as feminists. It was no surprise that this was not a popular term among our women. Most viewed it as negative. One woman, a vice-president in retailing, explained her opposition to the word: 'I don't relate to being a feminist at all; I relate to being me. I relate to being an individual and I think that I don't deserve this label of feminism just because suddenly I have as much self-esteem as the man who sits next to me'.

The sense that these women in mid-level leadership positions lack significant awareness of the role of gender in their lives was particularly vivid at the end of our interviews. We asked each one what advice she would give to a young woman who aspired to a leadership role. The answers ran the gamut and had only one common characteristic — the advice was entirely generic. The suggestions they directed towards women were equally appropriate for men. Likewise, these women, for the most part, do not see themselves as role models for other women, and few function as mentors to women.

Discussion

A number of our findings are congruent with the current literature on women in leadership. Most significant in this category is the highly relational character of the leadership styles of our participants. As with the senior executives (Astin and Leland 1991, Helgesen 1990, Rosener 1990), these mid-level leaders also stressed ways of working that focused on the important of participation, collaborative interaction, and knowing and embracing the different styles of their people. These leaders want the best in their staff to emerge — to have the people they supervise feel 'important' and 'good about themselves' and the work they are doing.

These women also cite responsiveness as a key value, not only to the people with whom they work, but also to the context of the situations in which they work. Again this is in step with what we know about women leaders. Helgesen (1990) provides us with the metaphor of 'the voice', of hearing others, versus that of visioning, to allow this responsiveness to both people and the context. The assumption underlying her observations on visioning is that in the visioning process leaders view their organisations in primarily objective and detached ways — they "step-back' to view reality 'with a clear eye', ...record truth impassively, 'like a camera" (p. 222) and then move their organisations towards the truth. In contrast, Helgesen emphasises that women leaders primarily base their work on what is being said around them — on hearing and listening to the voices that surround them. 'A vision may exist alone..., but a voice cannot be a voice unless someone is there to hear it; it finds its form in the process of interaction' (p. 223) and allows for the sensibilities of other people and the situation at hand.

Our finding that the majority of our women had linear career paths, as noted earlier was a surprise to us. The literature on women's leadership argues that women, because of family responsibilities and moves required by the husband's job, follow a more indirect path of career development (Baker and Bootcheck 1985, Morrison 1992, Shakeshaft 1989) .

On the other hand, what we learned about these career-oriented women is well supported in the literature: these women are usually either single or in non-traditional marriages. Clearly, the traditional model of marriage is not congruent with women's career development; as women choose to make their careers a priority, the model of marriage must change. The prevalence of linear career paths among the women in our study may indicate that these changes are beginning to take place.

The personal costs for women in mid-level leadership roles was a particularly strong theme in our study, and a troubling one. All the women spoke of the difficulties of balancing their personal and professional lives, and many told poignant stories of personal loss because of career demands, like the woman who missed her son's physics show because her flight home from Chicago was delayed: 'I missed the whole thing....I'm still sorry I missed it because...it will never come again'. Most of our women would agree with her that 'it's a very lop-sided life'. And it is lop-sided because the career model is designed for men, and women are expected to adjust to it. Organisations need to make major changes in the way they do business and structure their personnel policies in order to provide women the opportunity to integrate leadership roles with their personal lives. For example, organisations could 'change their recruitment and selection criteria so they do not favour men, encourage an organisational culture that rewards results rather than long hours, and...expand options for flexible work schedules' (Smith and Smits 1994, 45). These changes may not be seen as feasible or even welcomed as they deviate from how many think leadership roles ought to be framed and carried out. Yet, by not making these changes, organisations are missing out on the special talents and competencies that women have demonstrated they can bring (Astin and Leland 1991, Helgesen 1990, Morrison 1992, Shakeshaft 1989). Until changes like these are made, women will be forced to choose between continuing to pay a high personal price for their leadership roles or leaving organisations and moving out on their own.

Perhaps the most striking finding of our study is the absence of gender awareness among the women we interviewed. While all of them told us about some form of gender discrimination in their careers, most did not generalise beyond their personal experience to detect a systematic pattern of gender discrimination in the careers of women. They essentially wrote-off experiences as something to be expected, 'the cost of doing business', rather than problematise them and seeing such experiences as evidence of a pervasive pattern of discrimination against women in our society. Refusing to see the underlying power relationships that support such discrimination, they see no need to challenge them, and hence have no interest in aligning themselves with feminist agendas for change. They likewise fail to see the need to advance the careers of other women. It is obvious that these women will present no challenge to the status quo within their organisations. It may well be that it is women with these benign attitudes whom men in upper administration consider safe to advance to positions of leadership. This dimension certainly merits further study.

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Crossing borders and breaking boundaries: a series of paradoxes in researching the education of adults

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The adult education field is so diverse. I have indulged in that tried and tested measure of simplification by extracting from the real world sufficient defining attributes (assumptions) of the phenomena under study to produce two extreme views of what might constitute one source of the background for research into the theory and practice of adult education. This approach enables me to uncover a series of apparent paradoxes (contradictions, puzzles, inconsistencies, incongruities, reversals and equivocations) that appear to be contained within the field. The paper explores a number of positions that need resolution if credibility in researching adults is a preferred option for professional societies.

The implicit value system

In the hierarchy of things educational the pyramidal structure sees the apex of the system controlled by the university and all other educational and (dare I say it?) training endeavours fitting in somewhere beneath it. The study of adults is often defined in terms of what they have not got. For example this group of learners are referred to as post-secondary, technical, vocational, high school drop outs, illiterates, second language learners, second chance learners, third age learners, pre-university adults, adult matriculants . The study of the education of adults also encompasses doing research on, with, and by adults as university students or partners with academics. Thus the study of adult education is often concerned, at the one extreme end with people who do not get into these hallowed halls on the first try exiting from high school. These adults are relegated to 'other' areas educational, vocational, training, literacy.

Universities have always been vocationally oriented, despite claims to the contrary by traditionalists. However arguments concerned with letting into universities second chance learners or the academically unqualified have also been prevalent. The very notion of such labels designates the holder of this status to an inferior position on the academic hierarchy. However these days of economic rationalism in Australia where it is necessary to acquire many skills and change jobs the second chance learner often has a different curriculum vitae.

These second chance learners can carry one or more university credentials, but through circumstance, wishes or needs, must acquire a skill of a practical kind. Thus the economics teacher of 12 years becomes the commercial artist through the selection of her own tutor, negotiating the assessment in terms of yes or no and developing a works portfolio. In Australia an adult is also a person that can vote and or has attained eighteen years of age. Many of this age however are still firmly within the walls of high school!.

One adult education area that is receiving massive government funding currently is vocational education and training. Even here however there is confusion on the research front. Sweet (1995) maintains that in Australia that there is a large gulf between research in higher education (university) and research on vocational education of the majority of the work force (adults). He goes on to state that the absence of a 'culture of scholarship and enquiry' within vocational education (a substantial part of adult education numbers) has had three notable effects. Vocational education and research have been separated from the intellectual developments of the disciplines that could have 'enriched it, extended its understandings, and improved its practice'. Secondly, being separated from the world of ideas the field has concentrated its research on narrow and problem oriented issues giving little attention to fundamental and general issues. There has been a major focus on the curriculum package and little on policy, economics, organisation or management. He goes even further and asserts that most of the research is as a handmaiden and client of government agendas rather than that of the critical academic. Whilst vocational education cannot be construed as the totality of adult education many of the issues are similar.

With this background I now present two models that attempt to bring some insight to understanding and hence researching in adult education. I do not claim that they are the most useful or even most appropriate as guidelines for understanding the assumptions within the field of adult education for we are all products of our own Kuhnian lenses and paradigms.

The models

There appears to be two very broad models that can be deduced from an analysis the umbrella concept of adult education. Whilst it is acknowledged that each of these models is at the extreme of a continuum of variations in adult education and that neither of them actually exists in its pure form they are a useful analytical tool for uncovering the many paradoxes that are apparent in the field of adult education.

The first model, Model 1 contains the following broad assumptions that enable it to represent one end of the continuum for research in adult education.

1. All students are second chance learners
2. Students have little or no formal certification from high school
3. Students often lack the necessary skills of the literacies to fully function in society
4. Assessment is of the self or informal kind
5. Teachers of these students often lack formal qualifications in a relevant field
6. Teachers use the title of facilitator
7. Teachers scorn theory in preference to the practical
8. Facilitators do not direct the instructional events

9 All educational activities are outside the control of formal accrediting agencies.

Examples of this model can be seen in adult education that does not require certification.

The second model, Model 2 is characterised by the following assumptions:

1. Students are successful within the main stream school system
2. Students have formal high school diplomas
3. Students are highly articulate and well versed in the literacies
4. Assessment is highly formalised and other dependent
5. Teachers are highly qualified academically
6. Teachers are university trained experts in the theory of their field
7. Teachers use the methodology of the discipline and control the teaching act
8. All educational activities come within formally approved structures

Examples of this can be seen in adult education structures whose end points require certification.

The paradoxes

The initial paradox concerns who should control the knowledge and assessment base. All learners can learn without reference to teachers. Of course even without gaining certification learning can take place within a certification course. These are givens. However once the spectre of certification is raised there are certain expectations that have been developed within educational systems either at an explicit or implicit level. These expectations are concerned with 'standards' and 'standards' have something to do with assessment and accountability to others as well as the learner. The story within adult education when it comes to assessment becomes confused. The confusion and hence the paradox is concerned often with the adoption of incompatible forms of pedagogy within different systems of learning concerning courses for credit or courses for leisure.

The courses for credit can be conceptualised as leading to certification, the courses for leisure as everything else. Confusion in understanding the nature of education and assessment comes in when adult educators adopt the notion that assessment is the right only of the adult and that the adult knows best (Model 1).

This approach within the university sector (Model 2) is an anathema to the professional societies and the university administration. (Prior to the Dawkins era of rationalising universities and Colleges of Advanced Education and TAFE (Technical and Further Education Colleges) in Australia, TAFE was seen as a poor second class and lower status alternative for failures and those who could not make it to university. Their methods of assessment were often considered marginal within the university sector where no credit for study at TAFE was given. There were rare exceptions for example at University of Wollongong where marginal non specified credit was given). Within the university system 'proper assessment' requires external agreed measurements of performance (Model 2) apart from a self feel-good approach to validating learning outcomes.

The two basically incompatible approaches cause considerable confusion within the field as each supporter of an approach argues the rights of the assessment from a preferred value system. On the one hand the learner is the central focus, whereas on the other the integrity of the discipline is at stake. The boundaries and borders separating the approaches to assessment are very distinct. Hence any research into the best assessment or validating device to adopt as a standard for adult education is fraught with difficulty. Such questions as who has the right to decide on what assessment is desirable or appropriate becomes buried in the implicit assumptions that the assessors have concerning the nature of the learner, the definition of education, the appropriate curriculum focus, and the ownership of the validating devices.

Another paradox becomes apparent when I try to do research into the way knowledge is conceptualised within the field. For some adult educators knowledge is contained within the mind of the duo of learner and facilitator, true to the assumptions of Model 1. For others a triad of learner, teacher and the discipline, is the way towards the accumulation of the knowledge base, Model 2.

On the one hand knowledge appears to be personal, non verifiable and practical. Assessment is in the hands of the learner. On the other hand the knowledge base is public, verifiable according to the cannons of the discipline, theoretical and in the hands of the teacher. In the public arena of certification Model 2 operates, relegating the proponents of Model 1-like behaviour to fantasy land. Often the various proponents of these distinct styles reflect their own status as belonging to Model 1 or Model 2. For example those facilitators who lack formal discipline training appear to subscribe to the notion that the disciplined trained teacher typically found in universities is a mere theoretician and conclude that personal student knowledge should take precedence over ordered discipline knowledge.

The boundaries drawn often encompass the denial of the necessity for scholarship and qualification. The mere theoretician on the other hand finds the facilitator lacking a substantive knowledge base, no theoretical base for content selection or the solving of problems except of the immediate and practical kind. In this scenario knowledge is seen to give way to information which lacks a base in substantive principles. The answer to the question 'what knowledge is of most worth' seems to be, it depends on which border is drawn. The practical or the theoretical, the personal or the discipline. Maybe in researching the education of adults the answer lies in the diffusion of the boundaries and the clarification of the value preferences of the participants in the learning enterprise prior to any research undertaking.

The following paradox highlights the shaky concept buried in the literature that suggests that adults know what they need to learn (Model 1). Teachers become irrelevant and facilitators take centre stage . Under this assumption (from a Model 2 perspective) knowledge becomes trivial pursuit and assessment becomes some kind of invasion of privacy. It is quite clear that within the 'school education' movement largely because of time constraints and the public purse learners for the most part are not given control over what it is that they can learn. The knowledge base is too valuable and time is too short to relegate this activity to the learner. In the uncredentialled world of adult education where time is not of the essence and the public purse is largely irrelevant such constraints do not occur. However once the need for public verifiability of credential becomes a mitigating factor these assumptions no longer hold and Model 1 behaviour gives way to Model 2. If it does not then notions of authenticity, accountability, and professional value come into the equation. At this point the adult novice gives way to the discipline/teacher if the adult is to succeed. Of course Model 1 behaviour can continue to occur in either or both the learner and facilitator, but tensions will be apparent and the behaviour duly noted in a public failure to achieve. Medical faculties are facing this paradox in Australia where the public is concerned with the competence of the graduating doctor who has been the subject of either approach within a broad professional knowledge base that has to be acquired over the period of the program. Such an approach leads to the blurring of parts of the boundaries whilst maintaining the integrity of the knowledge base and the status of the student learner (combination of Models 1 and 2).

Connected to this paradox is the next which is concerned with the apparent close connection in adult education between reality and rhetoric and the confusion that arises when one is randomly substituted for the other. Some examples can best illustrate this paradox. On the one hand researchers in the field of adult education tell research students of adult education that the correct pedagogy is participative, democratic, negotiated group learning via self generated interest centred learning, guided by a non intrusive facilitator who negotiates with the learning-partner, assessment if any, at a mutually agreed time and way. Typically this missive is delivered through a non participative lecture that sees the content chosen by the lecturer, delivered in a traditional university mode of lecture, complete with a scheduled examination as the only form of evaluation fitted into a non-negotiable university timetable. The notion of do as I say not as I am compelled to do seems to be the instructional mode. This paradox also contains within it, the notion of the different pedagogy that is supposed to separate out the adult education and training field from the primary or high school approach of do as I say not as I do. However the confusion for researchers who wish to research current adult pedagogy, is that the models of perceived difference are just that, models. There is no apparent difference in pedagogic style in the Model 1 approach where all styles are apparent, from learner centred to at least content if not discipline centred. In the Model 2 approach there is merely a preference for the discipline approach to curriculum but the actual pedagogy can be seen across the board, ranging from discipline centred of the undergraduate program through to student centred in graduate programs once the major fields examination are mastered and the thesis remains. Coady and Miller (1995, 68) go even further and suggest that the confusion is one of activity not the purported poles of student verses teacher centredness. They contend that the approach is not either or, but of the conception of the way the activity is done, in for example, a discipline centred approach where intellectual autonomy consists in part of the ability of resisting the views and collective wisdom of the group or peers. This approach of course does not sit well with Model 1 who often see consensus as a necessary outcome of the learning activity.

The next paradox concerns curriculum approaches to adult education and this paradox gets to the nub of the notion of boundaries and borders. The various curriculum approaches in adult education are scattered across the ordered/chaotic continuum. Those bureaucrats that prefer the ordered curriculum at one end (Model 2) in times of financial stringency quickly dispense with programs that are seen as interest only (Model 1) despite the apparent success of such programs meeting student needs. What is education as it applies to adult learning environments? Dewey's (1971, 76) concept that education is that reconstruction or reorganisation of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to direct the course of subsequent experience appears to fit nicely, the public definition of adult education.

However as Model 1and 2 highlight, experience can be defined by a broad continuum of experience ranging from actual to vicarious as experienced through the disciplines. The paradox for researchers to come to terms with is in this conceptualisation of the adult experience.

The value dimensions of Model 1 and Model 2 adult educators can become confused if implicit values held by either camp are at odds with the funding authority as grants become processed. This paradox is rarely highlighted within the field of adult education yet it is an integral part of core business namely the paradox that exists in submission writing between inclusive curriculum and exclusive grant guidelines. An example should highlight the paradox.

In Australia, for example, at the moment the current Rural Adjustment Scheme guidelines within the strapped rural sector limit training to the acquisition of skills concerned with the financial, technical and managerial courses that have the capacity to enable workers on farms to do better at the things the majority of them already do well. The apparent premise for this approach is that farmers need to do better, that is, increase profits on farm and this form of training will help. In the old days prior to the time that farmers had a good general education this approach may have been more than satisfactory. However many farmers today are highly educated and trained and probably hold far better qualifications and have greater experience than their potential teachers. Continual reconstruction of experience that adds to previous experience and guides subsequent experience, except it appears within the governmental bureaucracy that dictates the form of the training to be received. If boundaries are necessary to identify the field how does one guard against insulation from the real world of the open system. Closed systems of models of research invariably get mistaken for the real world. Competency based training devoid of a theory base in adult education is one such fantasy alive and well in Australia. Within the real world of politics, economics and world trade to become viable, farmers have begun to develop off farm enterprises and it is in these areas they want and need skill development if the enterprise is to survive. The difficulty here for adult educators that help governments form policy is that adult educators need to be widely versed in the real world of commerce to enable them to define with farmers their actual needs for training and sadly this does not appear to be so.

Two final paradoxes are related and concern broad research paradigms within the field of adult education. One concerns the Model 1 adult educators' distaste for anything theoretical. This attitude is often fostered within the ranks of their students so as to develop some kind of primitive bonding. The second is concerned with Model 2 adult educators epistemological alignment that they received through socialisation into the respective discipline. In the first case the typical approach to any theoretical stance is to draw a border and claim that such and such is fine in theory but it does not work in practice. This of course is one of the greatest put downs for anything academic. However there is some confusion in this thinking and hence the paradox. Good theory extends good practice and the corollary of this is that good practice guides and extends good theory building.

Adopting a theoretical stance enables good practice to be extended. This approach removes the practice from the time dimension, the single instant, and the control of the facilitator. Such approaches extends the realms of the practical. If it works only in theory then the theory is no good and it should be upgraded to encompass the practical or it should be thrown out.

Finally (Model 2) adult educators and their funding agencies are tied up in what constitutes good and useful research approaches within the field. The very nature of the most appropriate research paradigm to adopt within the process is still buried in the rhetoric of quantitative verses qualitative method. Government agencies seem to favour quantitative statistical set piece experimental designs. Maybe it is time to adopt the case study paradigm as a more useful way of gathering data on what we actually do so that it can be used to improve practice. A case study approach appears to have a lot to offer, close to the research site, compared to other more esoteric contrived approaches.

I have attempted to highlight a number of paradoxes within the field of researching the education of adults. The use of the extracting device of models is a useful tool to help align the various positions adopted within the field. It should be pointed out however that such devices are extractions from reality as perceived by me. Others will perceive the world differently and construct dissimilar models to explain the same phenomena. Between the models is a vast array of continually overlapping blurs that could be referred to as borders or boundaries that restrict and confine the nature of the field of adult education. The implicit and explicit values that govern our behaviour especially our research behaviour may impair or enhance our geographic space. Some researchers need borders and boundaries to identify the research arena others do not. Degenhardt (1992, 13) claims that as long as we know and can define our pre-suppositions, our research can only be enhanced.

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Working the planning table: substantive and meta-negotiations in adult education

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As adult educators seek to democratise society in their daily work, they routinely face boundaries of historically-developing, socially-structured power relations organised by access to capital, race/ethnicity, and gender. Democratising society through adult education is about the redistribution of power and knowledge across these and other boundaries. A number of social and political theories (Wangoola and Youngman 1996) help us to see how these boundaries frame adult educators' practical activities. While such theorising is necessary, some authors note that 'it is in the content, methods, and processes of the teaching and learning situation that the adult educator concretises abstractions such as democracy and equality' (Youngman 1996, 27). With few exceptions (Tisdell 1993), however, theorising at this level has been limited. Walters concludes that 'our understanding of microeducational practices, which are crucial in mediating our macropolitics, is not necessarily advancing' (Walters 1996, 294). Recent work has sought to theorise the microeducational practice of curriculum planning (Cervero and Wilson 1994, 1996; Elgstrom and Riis 1992) as a social activity whereby people construct educational programmes by negotiating personal, social, and organisational interests in contexts marked by socially-structured power relations. Through a variety of case studies, these authors have demonstrated that negotiation practices are the mechanism by which power is exercised and that people's interests are causally related to the specific features, such as content and format, of adult education programmes. However, Sork (1996) has criticised this approach for failing to distinguish between the different kinds of issues that educators negotiate about in constructing adult education and the specific strategies and practices that people use in different types of negotiations. We agree that although these frameworks have allowed us to theorise microeducational practice as a political process, we do not understand the varieties of negotiations nor how they impact adult education.

Theoretical framework, purpose, and case description

In order to distinguish among forms of negotiation, we must make visible the relationship between power and negotiation. Drawing on Giddens (1979) and Isaac (1987), we have defined power as a capacity to act distributed to people by virtue of the enduing social relationships in which they participate, a capacity which may or may not be exercised on any particular occasion. This definition assumes that power is not something that a person 'has' but rather is relational with respect to other people. This distinction between power and people's exercise of it in concrete situations is also important because it makes a distinction between social structure and individual action while showing their fundamental relationship. In this framework, then, negotiation is the activity wherein people exercise power in constructing adult education. Finally, we argue that power relationships themselves are only relatively enduring and they too are subject to negotiation. People's interests and power relations are not static but rather are continually acted upon by the negotiation practices themselves. As Forester (1989, 71) puts it: 'Every organisational interaction or practical communication (including the nonverbal) not only produces a result, it reproduces, strengthening or weakening, the specific social working relations of those who interact'. Thus, the negotiations that people undertake to construct adult education always have two outcomes: the educational programme itself and the array of power relations and interests within which the negotiations take place. In sum, people both act in and act on their contexts through negotiation practices. Elgstrom and Riis (1992) characterise these negotiations as always occurring at two levels: 1) *substantive negotiations* where people *act in* the web of power relations to construct the programme's purpose, content, and methods; and 2) *meta-negotiations* where people *act on* the power relations themselves, and either strengthen or weaken these macro-level boundaries. While there are clearly outcomes at both levels, another important issue is to see how these two forms of negotiation affect each other in constructing adult education.

Our purpose was to characterise the relationships between the substantive and meta-negotiations in which people engage to construct adult education programmes. Specifically, we show that: 1) people conduct meta-negotiations concurrently with substantive negotiations, 2) people's meta-negotiations produce important outcomes in adult education, and 3) people's meta-negotiations directly influence the substantive negotiations about the content and format of adult education programmes. The data source was the case study of a management education programme seeking to improve organisational teamwork and communication. This was a two-day programme conducted in a retreat setting for 65 top-level managers in a 1200 employee company (Phoenix Company). Cervero and Wilson (1994) provide a complete description of data collection procedures and the educational programme.

The major participants in planning the Phoenix Company's management education programme were Mr. Jones (President), Pete (Vice-president of Human Resources), Joan (Director of Customer Service), and George (external leadership consultant). The programme that they develop is intended to fix an organisational problem. What is at stake in this programme is who gets to define the needs and the important features of the problem - literally who sits at the planning table (Wilson and Cervero 1996). That problem, as defined by Mr. Jones, Pete, and Joan, has to do with the flow of communication and the role of teamwork in the company. Our main point is that the substantive negotiations' outcomes are directly influenced by the meta-negotiations occurring at the same time. We show that even as these adult educators exercised power to substantively negotiate actual programme events addressing communication and teamwork problems, their meta-negotiations practices actually reinforced the power relations at the company which had originally produced the teamwork and communication problems. Of the many negotiations that produced this programme, we focus on three in the following sections.

Substantive and meta-negotiations with the president: who sits at the planning table?

Who sits at the planning table is a crucial issue. In the previous management retreat Pete had been caught flatfooted, literally away from the table, because he had not been prepared to produce the retreat when the president and the senior vice-president had wanted it. Pete's failure to anticipate the demands and his relative failure to move management training toward experiential education (a primary interest of Pete) indicated to him that he had 'really screwed up', which he came to realise actually meant he had relatively less power than other top managers to promote his interest of changing the corporate culture. This memory of his near disaster in the previous retreat compels Pete to change his meta-negotiation strategies, which means he alters who gets to the planning table. Whereas before he had followed the organisational chart, in the present retreat he breaks the chain of command by communicating directly with the president. As Pete says, this time he's 'going to be in control' rather than 'a sinking ship'. While his substantive effort is to change the focus of corporate education through these negotiations, his meta-negotiations are about strengthening his power to do so. Strategically, this means he and Joan limit access to the planning table to the president and themselves.

Four months before the retreat, Pete and Joan initiated the first meeting with the president 'to test the water, to get the go ahead' to begin planning. Ostensibly they were interested in permission and direction, but Pete also said, 'honestly...that meeting was more to cover me...the purpose was not to have a spring retreat as much as it was to document that hey, we talked to you about this so don't come back and say we didn't' (a reference to the previous retreat). Even so, the meeting with the president went well. Joan remembered that 'we talked about ideas, he gave us direction'. Their discussion focused on 'better communication from the department director level up and down'. Pete reported that it was the president's 'idea that we focus on the department meeting', with which Joan and Peter concurred. They concurred because each had evidence that this was the best definition of the problem for the training to address. Based on her meeting with a task force of company employees on customer relations, Joan concluded that 'one of the needs identified there was internal communication, camaraderie building...that a retreat was a good way to promote that'. Joan also reported that in interviewing for her position, the president had talked to her about the 'need to have better communication from the department director level up and down'. Pete had direct evidence about the failure of information flow in the company. At a recent departmental meeting of 60 people he participated in, 'nobody said a word or asked a question. So what does that tell you? It tells you that their department manager has not set an environment where people feel comfortable questioning and commenting. So, when we have a problem, then I'm pulled in to clean up the mess when the NAACP and everyone else has become involved...to clean up a conflict that should have been taken care of a little bit at a time'. Pete reported that the president had had similar experiences: he had been in 'a monthly departmental meeting with hourly employees and they kept telling him over and over again we don't know what's going on, our supervisor doesn't answer our questions'. Thus the three people at the planning table had substantial reasons for believing that communication and teamwork were breaking down at the departmental level in the company and disrupting the delivery of service. Consequently, their negotiations about the training purpose were quite consensual because each had a similar understanding of the problem and because they limited access to the planning table to themselves.

These initial negotiations are about two things: negotiating the substantive purpose of the programme and negotiating the power to determine that purpose. The major substantive accomplishment of this meeting for Pete and Joan was to get 'permission' to conduct the retreat and to know exactly what the president wanted to accomplish. But the meta-negotiation was concerned with establishing Pete's power take charge of the retreat and to move ahead as the company's training leader, rather than waiting for direction as he had done previously. So what appears to be a defensive move 'to cover' himself is actually a negotiation about leadership that is a subtle transformation of Pete's power which is linked directly and simultaneously with the substantive negotiation to have the retreat. Further, this strategy effectively limits who is at the planning table, which: 1) limits who gets to define the training problem, 2) helps to increase Pete and Joan's power to affect organisational life.

Substantive and meta-negotiations with the consultant about programme purpose

With only the president, Pete, and Joan at the planning table, nearly all of the substantive decisions about purpose, format, audience, and place were made. Pete and Joan then literally reset the planning table to focus on how they will deliver, or 'facilitate', the retreat. Because of George's interest in promoting participatory management, however, there is a tension between Pete and George about the retreat's purpose which lies as a sub-text in nearly every discussion they have about this issue. In their first meeting Pete overviews the structure of the retreat in terms of 'communication, team-working, and those kinds of things'. In explaining the purpose, Pete says, 'we want to provide a skill building opportunity on how to conduct a meeting, and this comes directly from the president, saying that information is not getting down to the lower levels of the company'. Pete goes on to give specific examples where managers have inadequately communicated with employees in departmental meetings, again stressing that the president is quite unhappy about the communication breakdown between managers and employees: 'How do you conduct a meeting with 30 hourly employees so that you give clear information, you allow for questions and challenges and complaints. But then you keep a teamwork spirit, you keep a positive representation of the company as you respond and not criticise other departments, not criticise top management'. Pete is negotiating at both levels here. First, he is clearly saying what he wants the focus to be (improving communication flow) and secondly showing that he has the power to establish that by invoking his direct authority from the president.

George raises a question about the retreat's purpose: 'Okay, let me clarify again - the people who are there see the need and value for these particular activities in terms of the objectives. Have they bought into the fact that, hey we need some guidance and updating on how to conduct good meetings...we see the value of being provided opportunity to handle difficult questions'. George, as an outside facilitator, suspects that the potential participants do not know they have the problem that top management thinks they have. Finally, George gets to the heart of their differences in designing the retreat: 'One of the questions that I have is the feeling on the part of the company that this is participatory management and that this is something that has become part of our culture in our department. Or is it something else? Because Pete may say, I want people to be participatory and be part of the decision making...but someone else may say that's not my philosophy'. Pete responds directly with 'Well, I don't think we're as participatory as we would like to think we are' and goes on to explain how the problem is managing meetings to accurately disseminate information, not participatory decision making.

The substantative consequence of this series of negotiations is that the purpose of the retreat as envisioned by Pete, Joan, and the president stays intact and George's substantive intention of focusing on participatory decision making drops from the programme. In a debriefing meeting, Pete explained to us: 'The way we do things here is that we generally don't think a whole lot about how people feel about participating; it's an expectation, and if we think it's important, they think it's important. We're pretty directive in our approach to planning things'. Pete went on to say he can be directive because he has his 'finger on what's happening from an interaction, from a morale, from a communication standpoint', meaning he has the power to say who sits at the table to define the company's needs. Pete also believes that 'opening the thing up and really talking a lot about participatory decision making' would be really threatening to the management team and not conducive to team building as Pete envisions it. So Pete 'kind of side-stepped him [George] in a way but I think I made it clear to him that we're a little more directive than we are participatory'. Therefore, Pete worked the planning table by successfully negotiating about the programme purpose (a substantive negotiation) because of his successful meta-negotiation with George about who had the power to make that decision.

Substantive and meta-negotiations with the consultant about learning activities

Although Pete clearly establishes the purpose of the retreat (substantive negotiation) and his power to do so (meta-negotiation), George continues to promote participatory decision making at the planning table. Pete and Joan, however, tend to endorse his programmatic suggestions whenever they feel the contributions do not alter their definition of the retreat focus. For example, in discussing specific learning activities, George promotes a 'desert survival exercise' he wants to use because it emphasises:

> The objective of working together as a team, particularly supporting others, leading in a positive manner, working co-operatively, that in order to survive we have to work co-operatively and support each other, have to listen to other people's ideas and they may be incorrect but we're going to analyse that later, why did someone with an incorrect solution or idea prevail, why did they listen to you when you said we should save this rather than what I want.

With this suggestion George is carefully trying to map the exercise to specific programme objectives. Pete enthusiastically responds to this suggestions but then attempts to alter it:

> You see that's going to be such a good follow-up to executive adventure because they will be laying the groundwork for those same kinds of questions. But we might want to pull out our vice-presidents to let them observe. ... I don't know...how our VPs might react. I want them to be as involved as they can, but I wonder if in this kind of exercise it might be good for them to be floaters. I don't know if they would be intimidating.

George responds directly: 'Let me react to it, I would do just the opposite. If they do dominate, we can say that, because I'm going to try to process it in such a way, well who dominated. Well, the president did. Now let's analyse that...I would rather have them participate because they're members of the team, otherwise we're having dichotomy'. Pete and Joan both respond enthusiastically — 'Good! We're glad we've got you!' — because they realise George will directly take the heat for disrupting the power relations at the company.

The substantive negotiation is about which learning activities to use and the substantive consequence is that George gets acceptance for an exercise he believes will help the programme achieve the stated objective of developing teamwork. In terms of meta-negotiations about power, however, George's substantive contribution does not greatly increase his power to make such contributions. In a debriefing, Pete and Joan said they went along with George's exercise because they wanted him to 'buy into' the retreat but also because it would not change the retreat's purpose. By seemingly sharing power to make a substantive decision, Pete and Joan nurtured George's commitment to the programme without allowing him to actually focus the retreat on participatory management, which meant they did not effectively weaken their power.

Negotiating at and about the planning table

Pete and Joan accomplished several things by working the planning table. Substantively, the need for the programme was defined as they wished, which allowed them to move the management training toward experiential, problem-based learning. Their substantive negotiations produced the specific features of the programme to support this experiential learning. Our central point is that these substantive negotiations come out favourably in terms of defining whose need the programme would address and its specific features precisely because Pete and Joan were successful in their meta-negotiations about their power in the company. In other words, if their meta-negotiations about power had not been successful, then they would have been much less likely to successfully negotiate the substantive features of the programme that they wanted. Thus substantive and meta-negotiations are simultaneously interwoven in daily practice. Our second point is that Pete and Joan's successful constructing and reconstructing of their relations of power in the company led directly to reproducing the problem the retreat was intended to address: reproducing the power reproduced the problem. As we have pointed out, by limiting who got to the planning table, Pete and Joan limited who got to say what the company's needs were, which reproduced their power to say whose needs were important and how they would be addressed. By relying on their own analysis — as Pete says, 'I've been here long enough to know' — a select group defined the problem. It might have been a very different definition of the problem if Pete, Joan, and the president had granted other affected stakeholders direct access to the planning table, the approach George unsuccessfully promoted. As it turned out, though, they defined the problem as the failure of the information to move correctly through the company which they inferred from the subsequent disruption of company business. Finally, that the planners defined the problem this way was directly related to their successful meta-negotiation about their power to do so. So the meta-negotiations *about* the planning table itself directly affected the substantive negotiations *at* the table about the content and format of the management retreat.

In this study we sought to theorise how the microeducational practice of curriculum planning mediates the macropolitical boundaries that frame our work in adult education. Using the metaphor of the planning table, we have shown how adult educators are always simultaneously negotiating about the important features of educational programmes (substantive negotiations) and about the social and political relationships of those who are included and excluded from such negotiations (meta-negotiations). In terms of the impact that adult education has on the democratisation of society, we conclude that both sets of outcomes are important. We believe that resolving the dilemmas and contradictions arising from the intersection of these two sets of negotiations are the fundamental political problem of our work as adult educators.

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Passports please! Crossing borders in a university graduate programme

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This paper chronicles the dialogic relationship that has developed between a feminist graduate student and her non-feminist male advisor in an adult education graduate programme, and the 'borders' each has had to cross to sustain and maintain that relationship.

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Sitting on the Number 10 bus, thinking, as it drags itself up the hill to the university. Worrying. On my way to pick up my final paper, written for Professor Sork, one of the three white (but not wise) men who have been my teachers for this first gruelling term at graduate school. How does a feminist learn in an androcentric programme? Like porcupines make love — very carefully, very painfully.

I need a good grade in this course. I have to apply for scholarships, awards, if I decide to stay on. I am not hopeful. The topic has been fascinating, the class dynamics disappointing. The professor has not been impressed by my style, or my performance, so far. I'd guess we are each other's worst nightmares. My writing, my subjectivities, my views, my ideologies, are not simply opposed to his, but so alien I wonder how we inhabit the same planetary space.

Later

I was right. My mark was abysmal. I don't know what he took the most exception to — my style, my arguments, my (profane?) use of his model, my typos, my formatting errors, my personality, my feminism..... All of them, I think. And maybe it wasn't such a good paper, but, for a first term, was it so bad? He agreed to meet and discuss it, but we reached impasse immediately. Maybe I shouldn't have told him he 'just didn't understand' what I was saying? OK, I may have been a little rude. So was he. He refused to renegotiate the mark, said I could rewrite the parts he 'didn't understand', (the whole paper) and he would 'review' it. I was so angry I could hardly see. I said, No, thank you, as I stood up, smiled, (well trained little lady) and left.

At least I don't ever have to work or study with him again. He's not a bad man. But he is a man.

Questions ...

I have so many questions about working with her: Why did she ask me to be her research supervisor even though I'm not a feminist or have any significant experience using personal narrative as a data source? Can I legitimately express the concerns instilled by my positivist training even though her research is clearly based on a post-positivist ontology? Will we be able to negotiate a defensible approach to the research and thesis that draws from both positivist and post-positivist paradigms? What language can I use in our discussions that will respect the views that she brings to the research while also 'self-respecting' my own views of what constitutes good research and good writing? Why do I have these negative visceral reactions to some of the things she writes and says and what should I do about them? Do these reactions come from an antiquated view of what constitutes knowledge and truth? If I insist that certain changes be made in her thesis before I approve it, will she and the other committee members regard it as a white male power trip of the same sort that she heard other women describe in her interviews? How can two people who participate in the same conversation arrive at such disparate interpretations of what happened? If knowledge is socially constructed, how can two people with such different perspectives construct understandings that will be regarded as valid by either of them? Will this relationship work? Why do I have so many questions about working with her?

Friday, August 16, 1996

Breathing in and out, trying to sustain life, is agony. I cannot move without pain; my nose and eyes are red, swollen, my rib cage hurts, I am crying, I am supposed to go out with my best friend, sightseeing. How can I?

Yesterday. I knew I had to get this draft to the committee Friday afternoon, because we meet on Wednesday. I must edit, rewrite, and defend on September 30 to be done by the Library deadline, October 15. Then I can claim my scholarship, conditional on acceptance into the Doctoral Programme — Tom has told me the thesis must be 'substantially completed' before he lets me in.

Yesterday morning I thought my committee was with me on this breakneck trip. My Five Women participants had talked about their reactions to the male model of graduate education; their stories of resistance, struggle, pain, as they tried to create their own embodied, connected, caring, creative community of learning had inspired me to weave my own story into their marvellous self-narratives. My committee. My Supervisor, Tom Sork, second (only?) choice after the one woman in the department took sick leave, a long haired poet and a feminist. We have only met physically as a full group once, but often by email, and individually. They had agreed to let me narrate the thesis in the biting Voice that had emerged as I wrote up my findings, *wrestling with feminism, Foucault, language, discourse, story... I wrote possessed, the Voice freeing the wild narratives from the spaces within.*

But I am, still, a student. I don't know yet how to do this work. My body tells me it's good, the Five Women think it's wonderful, but I need to hear that I'm doing it 'right'. I crave validation and affirmation. So, yesterday, secure in the new, warm feelings of community, me-and-committee-are-one, I emailed them, 'In your mail boxes Friday pm!' Tom emailed me back.

Tom. I have no sense of him, there is a lack at the heart of our relationship. Or, there is no relationship. I feel intimidated, awkward around him, picking up his reluctance to get personal, which I need, but which makes him uneasy, restless, irritable. Does my push for connection, personal acknowledgment, frighten him? Is he repulsed by intimacy? Is this male, or is it him? He always wears casual pants, dockers, checked shirts, Eddie Bauer kind of clothes, often a pen or two in his shirt pocket, one squeak away from nerd. This sartorial and impersonal informality is shockingly deceptive, for it covers a freezingly cold, formal body.

And yesterday, I fell into that frigid water. He says, curtly, rudely, 'I have no intention of reading a thesis delivered late on a Friday, over the weekend. I spend my time at the weekends with my family'. How could I have been so wrong? I knew I shouldn't trust him! Now I think of it, he never said anything at our meetings — only after the others spoke would he say OK, keep on with this work. This is the man who gave me my worst marks in my graduate career, stared coldly at me when I raised questions in class, told me he was sorry my cat died the weekend I wrote a paper for him, and then deducted 5 marks for typos. When I first turned in some powerful autobiographical writing to the committee, I spent the weekend kneeling at the toilet, sitting in the bathroom, throwing up, feeling gut and heart sick that they, no, he, should be reading my private story, ashamed that he would be reading my thoughts and fears and hopes.

I read his message. I started to sneeze. I sneezed and sneezed and sneezed. Trying to expel this man from my body, my work, my writing, spitting him out, his views, his boundaries, all his perspectives were so foreign, I needed to get him out of my system, out of me! I sneezed for four hours. I began to worry, nothing would stop the sneezing, my ribs began to ache, my head was exploding — this man would be the death of me. I thought of going to Emergency; at the fifth hour, I went over the road to the pharmacy for Benadryl, took four times the recommended dosage; at the sixth hour, repeated it between sneezes. I emailed a wail to the poet and the feminist. They were kind. I passed out. So much for finishing the draft.

But today I dropped one expensive copy into each mail box — Sork's too. And I ask myself, Why did I think this man was changing, learning to be my Supervisor, learning to understand my work? Why did I give him power over me, to give me permission, grant me validation?

Setting boundaries and feeling annoyed

I have felt uncomfortable working with Valerie on several occasions. Each time it has been for a somewhat different reason, but on reflection, each seems related to fundamental differences in our expectations about research, our 'asymmetrical' power relations, and our sense of obligation to one another. Valerie has high expectations for herself and for others, and I am sure that I have not lived up to her expectations of me even though I believe I have treated her and her work fairly. I did find myself setting a 'boundary' with Valerie that I have had to do with a few other students. When she was nearing the end of her MA thesis and, I am sure, feeling great pressure to meet graduation deadlines so she could formally begin the Ph.D. programme, she sent an e-mail message to me and the other two members of her committee late in the week indicating that she would be delivering the latest draft of her thesis to us on Friday so that we could read it over the weekend in preparation for a committee meeting the following week. I regarded the wording of the message as quite presumptuous because it assumed that I and other members of the committee would devote our weekend to reading her thesis. I sent a curt reply to the message pointing out that I spent weekends with my family and did not appreciate the assumption that her work would take precedence over that. I did indicate that I would read the draft prior to the meeting, but that my weekends were mine and not hers. I had already agreed to have a meeting only a few days after receiving her draft even though I usually expect at least two weeks to read material, and here she was presuming that I would also give up my weekend. I feel like the university already consumes such a large proportion of my waking hours and emotional/intellectual energy that I resent losing the little space available for the other dimensions of my life to university-related work. I have since incorporated into a document that I provide to students I am working with a statement that tries to set these boundaries out more clearly so that it does not seem like I am singling out a particular student. But I have found Valerie to be more demanding than the typical student and will likely have to continue to discuss the issue of boundaries with her, now more comfortably and directly than when this happened last year.

Just before Christmas as a requirement in the first-year doctoral seminar, she submitted a paper about 'the body and learning' that included some stories (narratives) about various events and experiences during her first term in the doctoral programme. I found most of these to be quite engaging and good illustrations of her main points. But she then told a story about a colloquium that I attended and attributed certain motives to those who stood in the back of the room (largely faculty members) rather than taking one of the few remaining available seats. In her story she made a comment suggesting that those who stood in the back probably had forgotten that they learned 'this horrible trick' in grade school as a powerful form of 'monitoring' the performance of others. I commented that such an attribution of motive essentialized those who were standing and did not consider other possible explanations. Such gratuitous comments about motives, I pointed out, although they make the story more engaging, also can result in readers disregarding her analysis because they know that there are potentially many different explanations for that behaviour that have little or nothing to do with power or with the school experience. I felt comfortable saying this because I was one of the faculty members standing in the back of the room and the reason I was there was that I had taken a phone call that went on longer than expected and arrived at the session after it had begun. Indeed, I would have much preferred a seat in a more comfortable location. So what does her attribution of motive in this story say about the use of narrative in building educational theory? My reaction to this attribution of motive is probably due in part to my prior training in which I learned that it takes only one valid counter-example to 'disprove' a theory. Valerie could have made the point just as effectively by posing a question and would have avoided alienating readers who may hold views similar to mine. Then again, maybe my views about what constitutes truth and knowledge are hopelessly outdated!

October 28, 1996

I have just returned from meeting with Tom. He had agreed to read my SSHRC proposal and, perhaps because I have been experimenting with notions of the Third Space, I felt myself shift into that space between when he told me, respectfully and hesitantly, that the language and concepts I was employing to talk about the body in educational discourse irritated him. Instead of reacting with cold anger and a dismissive (feminist) flourish, I asked him to tell me why, and then, to elaborate somatically, Just where did he experience those feelings of annoyance? It's visceral, he said, and I said, Oh, wonderful, you're having a bodily reaction! For about a half hour we continued discussing the topics of body, language, and discourse. For the first time, I felt we were meeting, not as subjects in an asymmetrical power relation, but as two people who were willing to venture into a different space and time, to dialogue in a space between, at AND, to create knowledge in a relationship that left our historicised and theoretically opposed contexts. We chose not to construct subject positions. It was energizing, but draining.

It represented an important stage in my growth as a person in the late 20th Century academy. I have talked, long and insufferably, about honouring diversity, about the glory of the postmodern moment as it celebrates difference, about community, about connection, about empowering pedagogy, about the politics of identity, about the first, second, third and fourth feminist waves. But I have not permitted my practice to complement my theory until that moment.

Now I can catalogue, not just the tyrannies of the white male, but the teachings. From Tom I have learned about academic discipline, about precision in my speaking and writing, about ethics, about boundaries, about professionalism in its best sense, about what it means to be not a perfect pedagogue, just a teacher who tries to learn from the student. I continue to be annoyed by him. I continue to reject his perspectives on feminism, on postmodernism, on language, on writing, on the use of narrative. I continue to debate programme planning, the politics of identity and essentialism; I continue to reject the masculinist, androcentric tradition of adult education I (used to?) think he typifies. But in my opposition to him, in my exploration of his Other, I have had to define my own theory, my own methodology, my epistemology, to defend my positions, arguments and ontologies. I have had to combine my poetry and his rhetoric. I have had to learn how to fight, and win, on his terrain. I have had to interrogate my own Voice. I have (had to) become rigorous. But what have I lost, as I have won?

November 8, ***1996***

I have asked Tom to write a paper with me that explores our relationship, a paper that in its stories might contain some answers to the questions that the late 20th century poses for those of us in adult education. And. But. I still wonder, what would it have been like to have been supervised by someone who was a feminist, someone who would have openly and caringly supported me in my always lonely, sometimes wonderful, sometimes painful, trek across the spaces of this masculinist and objective campus? Was I better off in my (apparently) complicit relationship with the Other? I fought subversively to corrupt him, to disturb the balance of his power, only to find myself subverted, converted to his rigour... I feared becoming soft and compliant, but I have found that standing at the margins, on the border, has given me a unique dual vision — I can look out and see my culture, and his, I have doubled my understanding/identity, choosing now one, now the other, and often, neither. What place can contain and nurture radically different subjectivities? What must be dis-placed before the two of us can meet, for longer than 30 minutes, as scholars? Whose edge must be blunted, whose sharpened? What kind of relationship could we construct which would allow us to share responsibility for instruction, evaluation and supervision? What kinds of practices, what kinds of discourses would allow him, and me, to remove the strait jackets of academic regulation? I believe power *can be shared. I believe in connection, in honouring affective and somatic knowledges, I believe in the power of the personal. But does the institution? Does Tom?*

Comfort and safety in 'the third space'

I am enjoying my conversations with Valerie, regardless of whether we end up agreeing with one another (rare indeed) or not. Since she started the doctoral programme we have had a different sort of relationship than during her MA, but I don't think the level of degree has much to do with it. It may be because she provokes me — and provokes is the right word — to think more carefully about the relationships I have with all the students I work with. I have never spent much time talking with students about the character of our relationship, but I have done this with Valerie and have valued being provoked into greater reflection. I sense that she still expects more from the relationship than I am willing or able to deliver, but our discussions have revealed our expectations and that's a good thing. I have a great deal of respect for her intellectual commitments and her ability to articulate her positions and argue the flaws in mine. My work has always benefitted from thoughtful, informed student critiques and she delivers them willingly. I am not particularly hopeful that we will have a 'meeting of the minds' on many issues, but then I don't think student-faculty agreement on intellectual issues is an important outcome of graduate education. Although I am occasionally annoyed by her unwavering feminist perspective on just about everything, I continue to learn from her, and for that I am grateful. We are now at the point in our relationship where she will decide what role she wants me to play, if any, in her doctoral research and I will have to respond. I still have many questions about working with Valerie, but we have found a way to meet in the 'third space' she talks about and I have found our meetings in that space to be very satisfying. But is the relationship we have developed, and the ease with which we now discuss it, sustainable through a demanding Ph.D. programme?

Valerie: *Well, Tom, this dialogue has been intriguing, uncomfortable, fascinating, and frustrating. In many ways, the relationship we have argued and debated our way to has validated and reinforced those annoying feminist beliefs of mine....*

Beliefs in the validity of knowledge created in partnership in authentic, reciprocal and collaborative ways, and beliefs in the necessity for mutual subjective and personal epistemologies to complement the practical, objective and theoretical ones. In fact, I only want to work with people I know and like. How about you? And one last question, I want to share the power and responsibility along with the other work involved, but I suspect that you don't. Still. Is there any chance for symmetry in this power relationship?

Tom: We seem to agree on many feminist principles and I have learned a great deal about those principles and how they can inform my teaching and research by working with you. But I don't regard myself as a feminist because I have not made the commitment to action that I believe is necessary to earn that label, although I do try to behave in ways that respect those principles. It might be nice to only work with people who I like and respect, but I don't regard that as either possible or ethically defensible as a university faculty member. I have come to both like and respect you, but the asymmetrical power relationships between faculty and students will, in my mind, always be in the background. We can negotiate how we wish to work with one another, I can promise that I won't abuse the power that I have as a faculty member, and you can do the same in relation to your power as a student, but in the end I will be sitting in a room with several other faculty members deciding whether or not you have met the university's (the faculty's) standards. I guess we need to talk some more about what it means to 'share' power in such a context! How about tea next Thursday?

The conversation continues...

Learning as a non-unitary self: implications of postmodernism for adult learning theory

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For a moment let's leave theory and the attendant vocabulary of the modern/ postmodern discourse aside and go straight to the lived problem: The modernist notion of a unified, fixed, coherent self simply doesn't work. The naturalist Lewis Thomas described it before the postmodernists did and certainly with greater clarity:

> The worst times of all have been when I've wanted to be just one. Try walking out on the ocean beach at night, looking at stars, thinking, Be one, be one. Doesn't work, ever. Just when you feel ascension, turning, wheeling, and that whirring sound like a mantel clock getting ready to strike, the other selves begin talking. Whatever you're thinking, they say, it's not like that at all. The only way to quiet them down, get them to stop, is to play music. That does it. Bach stops them every time, in their tracks, almost as though that's what they've been waiting for. (1974, 35)

Well, I'm not so sure about Bach, but I am sure about those voices. We're multiple, not singular. Rogers was wrong; there is no Authentic Self. I'm not ready to go to the extremes that some of the postmodernists do in arguing for a free-floating, utterly fragmented self without parameters or hope of coherence, but I do believe that our multiple selves coexist in some kind of kaleidoscopic way that we don't yet understand. And they're also very real to us, because they are the stuff of everyday functioning. That was brought home to me just the other day when I was describing this work to a friend, a scientist, who quickly cut through my modern/postmodern discussion of the nonunitary self by saying, 'I know exactly what you mean....I have names for mine'. She went on to detail some of them: her child self that plays and creates; her impulsive self that buys outrageous outfits and sometimes wears them; her assertive self that confronts and refuses to take no for an answer; and so on. She gave me further evidence that our everyday experience of ourselves is as a plural, not singular, being.

Given this multiplicity of the self, how can we think about those selves learning? While I began that exploration at the level of theory in an earlier critique of Mezirow (Clark and Wilson 1991), and there is much theory to bring to bear on this question, most persuasively feminist and postmodern work, I want to remain connected to the lived experience that gives theory its meaning in the first place. With my friend, I want to name some of those selves and explore their reality. My goal here is to begin to think about how a non-unitary self learns. To do that, I want to weave together several things: some useful conceptualisations from postmodern theory as constructed by Gergen (1991) and Kegan (1994); the possibilities presented by narrative analysis to access these selves; and my own experience of learning in multiplicity.

There is an interesting and growing body of self-reflexive research that offers unique insights into the personal experience of the researcher [see, for example, Ellis and Bochner (1992) on choosing to have an abortion, or Sparkes (1996) on enduring chronic back pain]. The personal experience I am choosing to reflect on centres around my decision two years ago to have elective surgery. I am at high risk for breast cancer due to both family history (my mother) and personal factors. In 1994 I had a breast biopsy that resulted initially in a diagnosis of cancer. It turned out to be a benign condition, but it was one that presented yet another risk factor, so my doctors suggested I consider having preventative surgery. A year later I chose to have bilateral prophylactic mastectomies with autologous tissue reconstruction. My reflection centres around my engagement with that decision-making and learning process. I identify several selves involved in that experience: my Embodied Self; my Rational Self; and my Gendered Self. While these certainly were not the only selves of which I was aware during that time, I see them as key players and among the more prominent aspects of my selves in that experience.

The possibilities of a postmodern self

The postmodernists aren't the only proponents of a nonunitary self. Loewenstein (1994) notes that both Freud and Levi-Strauss contested the notion of a unified, coherent self; for Freud, the self 'rather than a positive and coherent essence, is a loose net of contextual, contradictory, and shifting identifications enveloping not a discrete core, but its very absence'. Zurcher (1977) and Wood and Zurcher (1988) explore the idea of self as process. The concept of contested subjectivity as it is experienced by women, situated as we are within patriarchal culture, is taken much further in feminist theory, especially those informed by poststructuralist and postmodern discourse (see, for example, Weedon 1987, or Davies 1992). I am choosing here to focus on two approaches to the non-unitary self that are informed by postmodern discourse and that offer some interesting ways to think about the ways this multiple self constructs meaning from experience.

Kenneth Gergen has been exploring the idea of multiple selves for some time (Gergen 1967), but it is his engagement with postmodern thought that has coalesced in his concept of the 'saturated self' (Gergen 1991). Gergen argues, with others (see, for example, Baumeister 1987), that how we understand the self is a function of both culture and history, and he traces the development of the Western self from the 19th century romantic view with its emphasis on passionate inner forces shaping the self, to the modernist view that stresses autonomy and rationality, culminating now in a postmodern construction that mirrors the fragmentation of our lived experience.

> Under postmodern conditions, persons exist in a state of continuous construction and reconstruction; it is a world where anything goes that can be negotiated. Each reality of the self gives way to reflexive questioning, irony, and ultimately the playful probing of yet another reality. The centre fails to hold. (1991, 7)

He argues that the expansion of technology has exposed us to unlimited social stimulation and produced a saturated self, one populated by 'multiple and disparate potentials for being' (69), and subjected to a condition he calls 'multiphrenia', which he defines as 'a multiplicity of self-investments' (73-74). [For those of us overwhelmed by life's demands, I recommend this book for this wonderful term alone!] Gergen goes beyond multiplicity, however, and argues for the emergence of a relational self, one aware of interconnectedness as the constant that underlies change. His metaphor could well be spiritual when he describes a final stage 'in which self is replaced by the reality of relatedness — or the transformation of 'you' and 'I' to 'us'' (156). Rather than resulting in the chaos of fragmentation, he sees postmodernism holding the promise of a new discourse of relationship and interdependence.

Robert Kegan (1994), while writing from the perspective of cognitive development, shares something of the relational focus that Gergen advocates. He argues that the mental demands of our postmodern age demand the development of a new level of consciousness. The fourth order self is the modernist, unified self that feels and acts as a distinct and whole being who makes claims of completeness. The self at the fourth order of consciousness is understood in terms of form. The fifth order self, by contrast, engaging the pressures of postmodern life, experiences the self as multiplicity and potentiality, and any claims of completeness here are recognised as pretence. At the fifth order of consciousness the self is experienced as process rather than form. At this level of consciousness, relationship is foundational because the various elements of the self and the other are defined in terms of one another. Interestingly, and not surprisingly since Kegan is a developmental psychologist, he also argues that the self grows into multiplicity, a process involving the

> ... long and arduous labour of gradually creating a postmodern view of the world. For the self may indeed be multiple, not unitary, as postmodernists are fond of arguing, but not right away. Multiselved postmodern parents do not mate and give birth to multiselved postmodern babies. Half a lifetime, if not more, precedes these discoveries. And good company is required every step of the way. (331)

By 'good company' Kegan means educators, and he gives special attention to the role of adult educators in fostering fourth- (and hopefully fifth-) order consciousness.

Making learning visible:

Narrative and the non-unitary self

There is a rising interest among qualitative researchers in narrative analysis. The operative assumption here is that we make sense of our experience through the construction of narrative, and that in that process we also construct or present a self for ourselves and for others. To use the words of Rosenwald and Ochberg (1992) that form the title of their book, we live 'storied lives'. Narrative analysis, then, attends to both the content of those stories and their form (see, for example, Mishler 1986). It is useful for the examination of non-unitary subjectivity because narrative makes visible the construction and reconstruction of the various selves, and enables us to expose contradiction and multiple interpretations of those self-presentations. This has been used to particular effect in feminist research on women's subjectivity (I especially recommend Bloom and Munro 1995, and Chase and Bell 1994, two studies of women educational administrators).

In the narrative I provide here, I try to present an account of my learning process in exploring the option of prophylactic surgery, an account which gives voice to several selves most salient in my engagement of this experience. I particularly identify three selves — my Embodied Self, my Rational Self, and my Gendered Self — and I have chosen to speak as three voices in dialogue with one another, both to highlight their distinctiveness and to produce the most succinct reflexive account possible in the limited space available here.

My embodied self

My learning in a real sense began here, since my physical body was the site in which the learning was situated. It's also the aspect most difficult for me to bring to consciousness and articulate because my preferred mode of being has always been cerebral. I have never been particularly comfortable with my body and I have to make intentional efforts to be touch with it, to honour it, to be sensitive to its needs.

When I reflect on how and what this Embodied Self has learned in this experience, I have to begin with earlier memories because they provide the context. As I moved into puberty my awareness of my body was quickly laced with fear. I learned that it was potentially my enemy, and I learned that from my mother. I remember one scene particularly vividly. I was 9 or 10. My mother was lying on the couch in the darkened living room, having been to the doctor earlier that day for a needle biopsy. She had fibrocystic breast disease and had frequent biopsies. I'm certain she didn't know the result at that point and was anxious and frightened — and maybe she was also a little jealous of my freedom from care. Anyway she told me what she had had done and she showed me the puncture mark in her breast. I had started menstruating that year and my own breasts were already beginning to develop; I was struggling to understand the changes in my body and their implications for how I was to think about myself. Perhaps my fear began that day. When my first lump was detected by my gynaecologist when I was 24, it only gave the fear a more secure foundation upon which to rest and grow.

I learned to cope with this fear by distancing myself from my body. Before my prophylactic surgery I had had a total of three breast biopsies, and after each one I became progressively more distant, more alienated from this part of my body. Breast self-exams became more difficult, more tentative, and more rare.

My rational self

It's interesting that I also learned to cope with this fear by seeking medical examinations regularly. I put my body in the hands of my doctors, trusting to their expertise to detect any cancer in its early stages. I continued this even as I learned the limits of their knowledge, especially as the density of my breast tissue made my mammograms less and less readable and my increasing anxiety made physical examinations more and more difficult. Nevertheless I continued to seek regular medical advice, believing in its significance in spite of its inherent limits.

My rational self

When I was 50 I had my third biopsy, the one that resulted in the preliminary diagnosis of breast cancer and ultimately in the recommendation that I have prophylactic surgery. For two weeks I believed I had cancer (I didn't allow myself to hope that the diagnosis would be proven wrong because I had always believed that I would ultimately get breast cancer, given all my risk factors), and during that time I actively explored my options surgically. I was an active learner during those two weeks. Learning was my way of gaining some level of control and I was fully conscious of that. It's interesting that for me authoritative texts were secondary sources of my learning throughout this process. I never went to the library. I did call the American Cancer Society and request materials, and I looked at them when they came, but not closely. Here I was, an academic, but academic resources didn't draw me. Instead I turned first to people. Who did I know who could give me information? A key resource was a friend who was a breast cancer survivor and was herself an academic; she had aggressively networked when she was diagnosed and urged me to do the same. And it was through one of my students, whose friend had been diagnosed with breast cancer several years earlier, that I learned about autologous tissue reconstructive surgery.

My embodied self

For me the key element here was that it involved a single surgery — I would fall asleep with my natural breasts and wake up with my reconstructed breasts. That information was enormously freeing for me. It meant that no matter what else might happen to me, at least I wouldn't be maimed. I would still have breasts and they would be constructed from my own tissue and not some foreign substance. My body would be outwardly unchanged and this self would remain intact. Suddenly the unthinkable — bilateral mastectomies — became thinkable.

My gendered self

At the time I never recall examining or problematising the linkage between my embodied and my gendered selves. Why were my breasts so important to my sense of myself? I knew loosing another body part would not have had the same saliency. This learning is only emerging for me now, as I encounter some breast cancer survivors who have chosen to openly embrace their changed bodies. The photograph of the artist Matuschka, her mastectomy scar in full view, on the cover of *The New York Times Magazine* (Ferraro 1993) is a haunting image for me. I am a committed feminist, but this very personal learning process is deeply challenging to me, and still in its early stages.

My rational self

Making the decision to have the prophylactic surgery was quite straightforward. I sought information from the two sources I considered most authoritative: my doctors, and other women who had made the same decision. The doctors were unanimous in their recommendation. Based on medical advice, this wasn't an option, it was an opportunity. That the insurance company agreed immediately was further proof this was the right decision.

Finding other women who had made this decision was harder and I had to actively network to locate two of them. Both told me that they, too, had seen prophylactic surgery as an opportunity and continued to believe they made the best choice for themselves. Listening to them, I heard the echo of my own voice. For me it was the confirmation of congruence.

My embodied self

Being a patient — presenting my body to medical professionals to deal with — was a multidimensional experience. I learned to know my body as object, now to be manipulated and changed. I grew surprisingly comfortable with the objectness of my self, letting go of the pride and self-consciousness that usually inhibits me. I remember the plastic surgeon taking photographs before the surgery, then again after I had fully healed; she assured me that my face was not in the frame. This became a kind of metaphor for my body becoming an object of its own, open to the gaze of others. And it was acceptable to me.

I also came to a new understanding of ownership of my body. This was learned through my interactions with several women who had had this surgery, either for breast cancer or for prophylactic purposes. In multiple ways we shared our Embodied Selves with one another and that experience shaped me profoundly. I no longer think of my body as simply my possession; now ownership is a more complex construction, an awareness of connection with other women that is hard to articulate but one that I *feel* in my being. My Embodied Self has been transformed by this experience.

My embodied/gendered self

My separate voices are harder to maintain here. Reconstructive surgery creates a new body, and understanding that body and establishing a relationship with it is an unfolding process. And making sense of that in terms of the social constructions of women is an additional complexity. My learning is ongoing.

Concluding thoughts

This narrative of multiple selves learning is by necessity incomplete, but I hope that it demonstrates some of the possibilities inherent in the concept of the non-unitary self for theorising about the learning process. One aspect that I think is illustrated by my narrative is the complex relational quality of my learning, an aspect that both Gergen (1991) and Kegan (1994) argue for in different ways. Conceptualising learning using a modernist model of the self misses this relational dimension entirely.

I would argue that theorising learning from the assumption of a unified self privileges the rational, agenic self and thereby fails to recognise and to give voice to other dimensions of the self. Using a model of the self that is non-unitary enlarges the possibilities of analysis and has the promise of developing a more complex understanding of the learning process in adulthood.

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'A well-educated person is a man in a suit' : meanings, values and identity in the biographies of part-time adult learners

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> Narratives of liberation are always tied to people's stories, and what stories we choose to tell, and the ways in which we decide to tell them, form the provisional basis of what a critical pedagogy of the future might mean. (Paulo Freire 1993, xii)

This paper addresses a problem in my own experience as a mother, an adult educator, and a lifelong learner which is at the centre of my doctoral research into the relationship between biography and participation in Adult Continuing Education. The problem is related to a conceptual (as well as practical) conflict between notions of progress and emancipation, both at work and in continuing education, and the needs, demands and desires associated with domestic life and relationships.

For more than twenty years, I have worked in adult literacy and basic education, mostly in the inner city but, for the last seven years, in a rural area of Southern England. During this time I also brought up three children and have always been engaged in some kind of formal or informal learning activity. A part-time Masters degree course provided me with an opportunity to review my educational practice and evaluate this work in relation to Paulo Freire's definition of a problem-posing education in which '...people develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves'. (Freire 1972, 56) Reflection on my experience of running courses for 'Women Returners', combined with my reading of feminist theory, has led me to question the polarised stance of Freire's fundamental thesis that, since education can never be a neutral process, we must choose between engaging in education for liberation, or for domestication. Of course, education is never a neutral process, but the opposition of liberation/ domestication becomes problematic when we consider the extent to which our thinking about *liberation* ignores, denies or suppresses the *domestication* upon which we depend for our physical and emotional sustenance.

When practitioners write about adult education, we inevitably represent learners — their social histories, goals and desires — through a perspective which is framed by the educational aims and purposes of the course or programme in which we are engaged. From this perspective, positive outcomes are usually measured in terms of increased or enhanced activity in the public sphere of paid work or further education. *Progress* in adult education generally means sharpening the divisions between private/ public, subjective/objective, and emotional/ rational aspects of our lives. What would the notion of *progress* look like if we reversed the opposition of liberation/domestication to privilege the *domestication* which is associated with love and with the connectedness of one's own needs and desires to the needs and desires of others? My research question, then, is whether it might be possible to conceive of emancipatory goals which embrace these needs and desires.

In order to look at educational experiences from a standpoint which gives prominence to women's *domestication* I decided to study the biographies of learners who have regarded themselves as primarily responsible for the care of others and yet whose aspirations involve some form of continuing education. British and international surveys on motivation and participation in continuing education offer us various typologies of 'non-participants', all of which include people who:

- have a significant responsibility for the care of dependant(s)
- are engaged in additional part-time work outside the home
- left school with few or no formal qualifications
- live in rural areas

Course tutors in Further and Adult Education, using these criteria, have enabled me to locate a group of eighteen adults who have chosen to continue their education despite facing all the barriers most commonly identified as those which prevent participation in *lifelong learning*. Thirteen of these were enrolled on courses within an Adult Basic Education programme (including literacy, numeracy, and a 'Fresh Start for Women' course). The other five were enrolled on courses in hairdressing, care, business management, community organisation and counselling. Not surprisingly, all the participants are women. All but one are mothers and several also care for disabled or elderly relatives. They all live in West Dorset, a rural area in which a decline in full-time employment in agriculture, defence and small industry is marked by a growth in service-sector jobs where part-time workers with few qualifications comprise a marginalised but growing sector of the workforce. One member of the research group works the twilight shift in a factory while all the others work in shops, offices, catering, care or cleaning jobs.

I conducted three, hour-long interviews with each group member in her home, followed by a series of group meetings. Each interview had a different focus, based on a questionnaire, provided at least a week in advance, on 'Education', on 'Work outside the home', and on 'Unpaid work in the home'. The questionnaires all followed a similar chronological pattern, beginning with childhood memories of the stories told by, or about, parents and grandparents, moving on through to the present and finishing with hopes and plans for the future. Some members chose to provide written responses to the questionnaires, which were followed up in the interview. I transcribed every interview, ensuring that members received the transcript of each interview before we embarked on the next one. The questionnaires divide members' lives into three broad spheres of activity, structure them in a linear time sequence, and concentrate on particular experiences and ideas to the inevitable exclusion of other possibilities. The resulting data cannot capture members' real lives, nor provide a transparent window on their experience. The only *objective* data for my study are the tape recordings and transcripts which can now be analysed for the meanings, values and subject positions represented in the text.

My aim in this analysis is not to prove a hypothesis, but to open my eyes to new meanings, new ways of thinking, which might be glimpsed through the ways in which a particular group of people, located in a marginal relation to formal education, make sense of their lives. The following account of work in progress offers some examples of the approaches I have been using so far with no more than a suggestion of the problems which we might wish to pose in any discussion of 'what a critical pedagogy of the future might mean'.

Taking an extract from a pilot interview, I began with an analysis of the discourse in my transcripts, using the work of Michael Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan on functional grammar. I chose this framework because of its focus on the social function of language and emphasis on the interaction between social context and the interpretation of meanings. In this approach, all 'language which is functional' is regarded as text, and the text is seen as a form of exchange in which continuous semantic choices are made in a 'network of meaning potential'. (Halliday and Hasan 1989, 10) A brief example is offered to indicate some features of this approach.

Heather[1] manages a café which was located near some public toilets. She had been talking to me about how she had spent her time over the previous two weeks. In the following extract, (.) indicates a pause no longer than one second and [indicates overlapping speech.

1 H now it's just automatically part of my job
2 they just say oh you'll lock the toilets again this year won't you
3 and I just sort of say OK
4 J but you don't get any (.)[payment recognition
5 H [oh no (.) nothing no
6 I just do it (laughs)
7 well it's like doing any of the hundred and one other little jobs you do isn't it

A careful analysis of the longer extract from which this sample is taken revealed various constructions of the concept 'work'. The business of managing a cafe, referred to as *my job* in line 1, is distinct from the *hundred and one other little jobs you do*, and further functional analysis of, for example, the use of a modal adverb *just* (lines 1, 2, 3 and 6) in utterances associated with only one kind of 'work', shows varying degrees of affinity with each kind of work in different situations. Similarly, the choice of first or second person in *I just do it* (line 6) and the *little jobs you do* (line 7) draws our attention to the implied attributes of *you* in this discourse. My own role in the construction of meanings is also exposed in this analysis. While most of my utterances are in an interrogative mood, the question in line 4 is not. The pause is followed by two words providing possible answers to an unspoken question, ('Why do you do this job?' or 'What's in it for you?') and the particular lexical choices of *payment* and *recognition* limit the scope of possible answers and tell us something about my stance in relation to the topic. Thus we can see how the choices we make in the design and structure of every clause in every utterance are choices, (albeit unconscious choices), about the way we '...signify (and construct) social identities, social relationships, and knowledge and belief'. (Fairclough 1992, 76)

Having identified the possible insights to be gained from this level of analysis, I needed to establish some criteria for the selection of extracts for such close attention. Setting aside my linguistic lens, I adopted an ethnographic approach, scanning the transcripts in order to identify themes and categories which might emerge through a focus on the content, drawing on my own common sense understanding of what is signified by the words and phrases in the text. A series of readings suggested over thirty topics worth investigating under headings like 'Fatalism', 'School memories', '(Un)desirable jobs', and 'Choices: caring for others'. Searching under a heading 'Education means...', I noticed a surprising consistency in the responses to two questions posed in the course of the Education interviews. These asked members about childhood memories of any adult who they might describe as well educated and again, towards the end of the interview, asked whether they know anybody now who they would describe as well educated. So I went through the Education transcripts for all eighteen members and found the same images cropping up again and again. From childhood memories, four members mentioned female teachers, but all the others provided variations on the following description, which represents a compilation of their responses,

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[1] Members each chose their own fictitious names which are used throughout.

> A well educated person is a man in a suit who talks with a posh accent. He goes to work with a brief case, earns good money, lives in a detached house and drives a smart car.

In every case, there was an enormous gap between members' representation of themselves — their interests, achievements and social status — and their representation of people who were well educated. Responses to the second question, regarding current perceptions of well educated people, were more varied and a few members had come to relate the idea of being well educated to their own experience. However, these observations still carry a strong sense of ambivalence as exemplified by the constantly changing subject (*I, people, somebody else, they, you, I*) in Tiffany's remarks,

> I used to think people with O Levels[2] were really clever and somebody else would think people with degrees are clever, and when they actually get there you don't, you just think oh, I achieved that...

How can we expect people to formulate educational goals for themselves when the ideas about educated people which they grew up with are so far removed from anything they might aspire to become? This question has led me to focus on those aspects of the data which relate to members' self perceptions, and their ideas about what it means to be educated. Convinced by arguments about the role of narrative in the construction of meaning and of the self, I have now adopted a framework for the linguistic analysis of narrative developed by James Gee. (Gee 1991)

Gee's approach recognises the poetic features characteristic of spoken narratives, and offers a framework for their transcription and interpretation which draws our attention to the ways in which the story is structured in the course of its telling. In the example which follows, the story is organised in *stanzas* which, as in formal English poetry, tend to be four lines long and deal with a single topic. The *lines* in each stanza approximate a written sentence and each line may comprise one or more *idea units*. An idea unit contains a single new piece of information, the FOCUS (printed in capitals) which is signalled by pitch movements in the voice of the narrator. This very sketchy explanation should suffice to convey the point that we structure our spoken discourse in such a way as to rule out some possible interpretations and constrain others by the questions asked in the structure of the texts. Gee argues that, '..interpretation, like visual perception, is an amalgam of the structural properties of texts and creative inferences drawn on the basis of context and previous experience'. (Gee 1991, 16)

The following example is a short 'before and after' narrative which also provides an evaluation of the longer narrative related in an interview with Rosie, based on my Education questionnaire.

> STORY: OUTSIDER/INSIDER
>
> *I always felt like an outsider at school*
>
> 1. I always felt like an OUTSIDER at school/ ALWAYS
>
> 2. I ALWAYS FELT/ like I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THERE/ and I WASN'T REALLY THE SAME as anybody else there/ I was ALIENATED
>
> 3. Because it was a VERY SNOBBY SCHOOL/ where a lot of people were VERY WELL OFF/ and had a LOT OF
>
> 4. And I just felt completely DIFFERENT and out of it
>
> *Now I'm on the inside*
>
> 5. And yet NOW/ because I've got friends now who are JUST GETTING BACK IN to education/ I'm one of the (laughs) INSIDE CROWD if you see what I mean
>
> 6. I've BEEN THERE/ I've STARTED IT/ I've DONE IT/ I'm WORKING AS WELL
>
> 7. And I've got a job that fits in quite well with the things I HAVE TO DO you know
>
> 8. So I'm in that respect I'm this time I'M IN THAT SITUATION/ I'm on the INSIDE

This outsider/insider metaphor is an example of a common linguistic practice in which an emotional state is conceptualised in terms of physical space or direction, the most common examples being *up* for happy and *down* for sad. (Lakoff and Johnson 1980) Rosie tells us that she was on the outside of one container, 'school', but is now on the inside of another, 'education'. What do these containers have in common?

A linguistic analysis of this story throws up the interpretive questions which need to be asked, but for an exploration of these questions I drew heavily upon the additional life history data which Rosie provided in our interviews. This means treating the information *as if* it provides a window on experience in order to make 'creative inferences' about the connections between the events signified and the ways in which the story functions to express, confirm and validate a particular self identity.

In an earlier story, Rosie had talked about the events leading up to her return to education as a mother with four children. In that story, a friend had persuaded Rosie, despite her protests that she was too busy, to enrol for a course leading to a GCSE in 'Welfare and Society'[3] The story concluded,

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[2] GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) replaced O'Levels in the 1980s to accredit a broader range of achievement at 16-plus

> 31. And I MUST have known/ it was what I WANTED TO DO/ because when I went down to SIGN UP for it/ I had to STAND IN A QUEUE with H in my arms/ for TWO HOURS (laughs)/ to get my NAME down for it
> 32. So I must have REALLY WANTED TO DO IT (Rosie, 'Further Education')

From Rosie's representation of her childhood, I inferred that she felt like an outsider at school because her family's circumstances did not conform to those which were assumed to be the social norm in a small town grammar school in the early 1970s. If being an outsider meant, for Rosie, non-conformity with a dominant culture, then what, I asked, is the dominant culture in the world of 'education' to which Rosie now conforms? The image of Rosie standing for two hours in the enrolment queue with her child in her arms provides a graphic picture of a culture in which women are expected to continue holding the baby while engaged in paid work and also pursuing educational qualifications. This is the culture in which Rosie now feels herself to be an 'INSIDER' because she is, at this moment in time, managing to balance the things she 'REALLY WANTED TO DO' with her domestic commitments — 'the things I HAVE TO DO'. Her membership of this culture, however, will always be tenuous as any increase in the demands from, (or the relative attractions of), the domestic front could tip this balance and threaten Rosie's continuing membership of a culture which will only tolerate the incursion of our domestic lives into its institutions to a very limited degree.

Those of us who are engaged in education for Women Returners are caught in a contradiction when we want to validate women's domestic experience and yet the very notion of *Woman Returner* locates women's domestic activity on the outside of the desirable place which we are encouraging women to return to. This echoes Rosie's conception of education as a container which her friends are 'JUST GETTING BACK IN to' and where she is glad to identify herself among the 'INSIDE CROWD'. Similarly, in our attempts to design courses for women which fit around the times when children are in school, are we accepting Rosie's perception that caring for others at home is not a free choice but comprises 'the things I HAVE TO DO', while education is the place where human agency operates, where people can do what they really want to do?

In her investigation of the nurturing activities of mothers, Christine Everingham challenges the notion that a child's needs are objective, biological facts and argues that children's instinctual impulses are constructed as *needs* through '..a process of interpretation and judgement carried out by the mother in a particular 'mothering culture'... (Everingham 1994, 7) We need to ask ourselves how we, as adult educators, contribute to this 'mothering culture' by regarding domestic commitments as something on the *outside* of our real concerns. As Christine Everingham points out,

> How one category is defined depends on what it excludes. Since nurturing has strong links to ties of sentiment and the bodies of women and children, it is excluded from the sphere of human agency, or free-will, and placed in the opposite realm of nature. Here, it is seen as a timeless and unalterable activity, guided by natural laws and associated with the natural attributes of women.. (Everingham 1994, 6)

Rebecca O'Rourke claims that issues of women's identity *are* included in the courses run by radical educators for women returners but writes that problems arise when these women progress on to Higher Education courses where the argument still needs to be heard that 'Femaleness, sexuality, class or racial belonging won't wait patiently *outside the door*'. (O'Rourke 1995, 119) (my emphasis) Rosie's story draws our attention to this metaphor of outside/inside and suggests one of many possible ways in which we might question the nature of this place we occupy and the conditions for inclusion which are perceived by those on its borders.

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[3] O Levels (Ordinary Level) certificates in five subjects generally indicated successful achievement in secondary education at age 16-plus in England and Wales although the exams were only taken by a minority of pupils. None of the research group members left school with five O Levels.

'We'll all be rooned', said Hanrahan

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In recent years, adult education administrators in rural areas of New South Wales, Australia, have been forced to deal with large scale problems. Rapid changes in society's values, the information explosion and unemployment are just a few of the problems adult education agencies have had to face in fulfilling their role within the community. These problems have been compounded by a severe economic recession and a record-breaking drought, together with reduced government funding.

All these difficulties resulted in a persistent and steady stream of complaints from the rural agencies about their plight. The futures of some looked bleak, and this brought to mind the outlook adopted by Hanrahan, the hero in a well-known Australian verse. Hanrahan was a typical bush pessimist. The observations he made on rural life concerning drought, rain, bushfires and even the banking system led him to claim constantly in a broad Australian accent that 'we'll all be rooned before the year is out'. Nothing would go right for Hanrahan. Nothing would go right, it seemed, for some of the agencies either, and it appeared they also might be headed for ruin.

So, the title of this paper likens some of the agencies' complaints to the outlook on life of Hanrahan — all gloom and doom, with little hope.

The fairly stable and predictable environment in which rural adult education agencies had operated for so long changed dramatically in a short period of time in the early 1990s, and these changes should have signalled a change in the administrative practices within the agencies. For example, enrolments for Term 1, 1991, in rural evening colleges decreased by 26% in comparison to the same period the previous year. Decreasing enrolments caused by aspects within the colleges' operational environments led to a considerable loss in revenue.

Administrators in some colleges were forced either to abandon some classes or to present classes at a financial loss, in order to preserve their philosophical approach to adult education. Finances in the colleges accordingly were reduced severely. Most faced a financial crisis.

As the recession and drought worsened, a range of different administrative performances by the colleges emerged. Some colleges searched for new opportunities in their professional environment and succeeded in ensuring the financial viability of their operations. Others simply continued with their traditional programme, and experienced even further financial losses.

One of the new opportunities which unexpectedly presented itself was the Training Guarantee Scheme, an initiative introduced by the Australian Federal Government in early July, 1990. The intention of this scheme was to improve the efficiency and international competitiveness of Australian industry through an increase in the level and quality of employment-related skills in the Australian workforce. Public and private sector employers whose annual national payroll was above the threshold of $200,000 were required to spend the equivalent of 1% of payroll on structured training in 1990/91, rising to 1.5% in 1991/92. Government figures estimated that the scheme would result in $800 million additional funding per year devoted entirely to training. The Act provided a list of criteria to training institutions in order for them to become eligible to deliver the training. Evening colleges were ideally placed according to these criteria, and it should not have been too difficult for them to consider the new opportunities available in this field and enter it. It presented an opportunity to cross borders and break new boundaries.

Any decision to involve an evening college in a new venture would normally require the combined effort of the college's co-ordinator and management committee. The management committee usually consists of people drawn from the local community — volunteers with a sense of civic duty, from diverse academic and vocational backgrounds, imbued with a desire to serve their community. Usually they meet on a monthly basis for around two hours or so and discuss matters pertinent to the management of the college. Authors such as Hanson (1980), Jones (1974), Bacon (1974), and Kowalski (1988) offer thoughts on the role and function of such committees, embracing concepts such as the profiles of volunteers, their training, and the planned coordination of resources. However, they do not go into any depth of detail regarding the roles of co-ordinators, the roles of management committees, or the working relationships between co-ordinators and committees. The literature dealing with Australian adult education agencies, and evening colleges in particular, is very sparse regarding their overall management.

Evening colleges: their charter and composition

In order to become accredited by the New South Wales Board of Adult Education and receive funding, an evening college, along with other agencies, must meet several prerequisites. Two of these are that the college must be a non-profit organisation operating for the sole purpose of conducting an adult education programme, and that membership be open to any person in the community. Although deemed to be non-profit-making, it doesn't follow that colleges should not make a profit. The Australian observer Hansen, (1991, 231), observed that adult education agencies, as a result of government policies to fund according to 'performance', were having to adopt a 'more entrepreneurial, business-like approach' to market their 'product' ... to attract more 'consumers', for 'financial survival'. If colleges are managed along cost-effective lines they can use any surplus finances to subsidise other courses demanded by the community or which fit the college's philosophy on adult education.

The positions on the committee are: a president, who chairs the meetings and assumes some measure of leadership and concern for the future and welfare of the college; a secretary, who is responsible for general committee duties such as correspondence, meeting notices and reports; and a treasurer, who handles the financial accounts, deals with auditors, and prepares monthly and annual statements. These three office bearers usually form the college's executive whilst the remaining 10 or 12 members make up the committee. The committee is elected democratically at an annual meeting. It is rare for positions to be contested and put to the vote. Usually the positions are arranged informally prior to the meeting.

Changes in the environment

Most of the adult education literature on the management of evening colleges is bland in that it only deals with management in an ideal, superficial way and ignores largely the influences of the colleges' environment. There is nothing in the literature which considers the way a college should be managed in harsh economic times. What does an organisation do to protect itself in such times? More particularly, what does an evening college do in order to survive and prosper when confronted with unexpected changes in its operational environment? What can be said about the management of a college when it is in crisis?

The problem

The problem, then, for this research was to identify and analyse how co-ordinators and management committees successfully manage evening colleges in rural New South Wales during periods of adverse conditions. This involved a focus on the administrative functions of the co-ordinators and management committees as well as an examination of the working relationship between the co-ordinators and management committee.

The problem raised three related questions:

- What is the nature of the co-ordinator's administrative function in a successful evening college?
- What is the nature of the management committee's administrative function in a successful evening college?
- What is the working relationship between the co-ordinator and the management committee in a successful evening college?

The sample for the research was selected purposefully with extremes in mind. At one extreme were two rural evening colleges, one deemed to be 'successful' in its management and which had involved itself in the Training Guarantee Scheme, and another similarly successful but which had not participated in the scheme. At the other extreme were two deemed to be marginal or 'non-successful', again, one involved in the Scheme and one not. The selection of colleges comprising the sample was made, using relevant data in the published annual reports of the NSW Board of Adult Education, by a prominent member of the Board. Thus, purposeful sampling was used to reveal respondents who were 'information-rich' (Patton 1990, 169) and who could shed light on issues of central importance to this study. Tape-recorded interviews were conducted with those respondents. During the interviews with the members of the various management committees, attention was given to the possibility of the emergence of 'key-informants' (a label given by Merriam (1989, 93)), who might also provide insights in helping an observer to understand what was happening. The data were analysed using the constant comparative method.

Study findings

For the purposes of this paper study findings will be restricted to the highlights. The four researched colleges will be referred to as #1, #2, #3 and #4. The findings to the three research questions are presented below.

The co-ordinator's administrative function in a successful rural evening college

This study into the co-ordinator's administrative function in a successful evening college resulted in a wide range of managerial concepts. The co-ordinators of successful agencies tended to display a more entrepreneurial spirit, to have a more intuitive grasp of their field, to be more people-oriented valuing team building and trustworthiness, and to display more vigour in their leadership qualities than their non-successful counterparts. Also, the successful co-ordinators showed a more self-confident, positive approach to financial, economic and staffing management.

'Economic and financial skills' were the necessary skills named by all co-ordinators, successful and non-successful, in such words as, 'You have to be a financial wizard ... you have to be able to manage money ... certainly where you are juggling large sums'; another commented, 'I monitor our budget very closely ... I try to provide realistic figures for our circumstances out there in everyday practice'.

Yet another stated, 'As far as management skills are concerned, co-ordinators definitely have to have economic and financial skills'. This emphasis on economic and financial skills no doubt was induced by an awareness of the reduced budgets which had had an impact on the day-to-day management of colleges.

The successful co-ordinators displayed a self-confident approach to their roles. They seemed assured that the direction that they were taking was the correct one. For example, asked if tough economic times had affected her managerial style, Co-ordinator #4 responded, 'No. Overall it did not really affect my approach to anything. As a matter of fact, in some classes we actually charged more. I had done quite a bit of research and I found that people were willing to pay for what they wanted. And those that we felt could pay that little bit extra, we charged more as an experiment, and it worked'. Co-ordinator #2 confidently stated, 'We needed to improve our service and deliver a better product, and to do that we had to pay additional staff. The main thing is that we had to identify trends, then offer those programmes and do the sort of things we are skilled at to enable us to keep going'.

In the case of non-successful co-ordinators, tight economic times had caused them to cut staff hours, reduce course offerings and then search around for available Government funds. Co-ordinator #3 commented, 'We actually managed our can of pennies very, very tightly ... you recycle anything and everything. You have got your eyes open for any grant that's going, to see whether or not you can apply for it. You work many more hours than you are paid because you cannot afford extra staffing'. The Treasurer at College #1 disclosed that 'we reduced the staff hours by about thirty to fifty percent to make sure our expenses did not exceed our revenue. We cut back their hours, but they still really put in the same hours without being paid for it'. The Co-ordinator at this College added to this by stating, 'The staff agreed to take less money and work fewer hours but they always came in and stayed for extra hours, as happens in adult education normally'. This Co-ordinator was supported by her President, who divulged that the financial crisis had been so severe that the committee had actually discussed the drastic possibility of closing the College for a term, 'just to stop us from spending money altogether'. The answer to the problem, it seemed, for these co-ordinators, was either to work harder, or consider not working at all. This 'coping' mechanism was in stark contrast to the successful co-ordinators, who showed by their managerial behaviour that the answer was not to 'work harder' but to 'work smarter'.

The management committee's administrative function in a successful rural evening college

Briefly, it was found that successful management committees tend to incorporate a collaborative approach in their administration rather than become dispirited and apathetic. They seek innovation and development for their agency, rather than hope for survival through crisis management. They tend to 'head-hunt' when recruiting new members rather than leave it to the 'old-boys' network. One of the successful colleges had a unique structure which assisted its decision making processes.

Across all four evening colleges there was general consensus from co-ordinators and members that management committees should concern themselves with administrative such as policy, strategic directions, staffing, decision-making and monitoring. Although were the stated aims of those interviewed, differences were revealed in the ways that they did or did not apply those aims in practice. For example, not one college could say with any that they intentionally developed and pursued a business plan with any great rigour. The President of successful College, #4 stated, 'Business plan? No, not as far as a written down business plan'. In this, he was supported by the key informant in his college who said, 'We don't have an official business plan at all. We have an overall fuzzy plan and objective to ensure that the community is forever given the opportunity for life-long learning'. The President of the other successful College #2, remarked, 'I have tried to make the committee meetings more business-like and we should be looking at strategic directions'. So, since these successful colleges had no business plan along the lines one would expect in the corporate world it had to be something else which propelled their success. The 'something else' was a collaborative approach to their administration which was the key to their success.

The collaborative approach which successful committees incorporated into their management function was based on an implicit faith in the decision-making abilities of fellow committee members and the talents of their co-ordinator. In the case of college #2, the Treasurer believed that 'We have had some great people on the committee here who have really been an absolute boon. For example, we have the Training Manager from a large local corporate company and he is one who is ideal really because of his close affinity with training and education. But, without any fear of contradiction, the most important position on this committee is the Chairperson....in that regard, this College has been most fortunate. Another committee member offered support by stating further, 'It is a good committee because we always have the opportunity to go and see the co-ordinator if we are not happy with what's going on and express our feelings'.

A committee member from successful college #4 was also commenting on the collaborative nature of her fellow members when she stated, 'I found the role to be quite satisfying personally. I feel that our committee represents a broad spectrum of interests and knowledge. We have some professional people who are extremely quick at making decisions. Each person feels important'.

One successful college had a structure of three sub-committees: Resource sub-committee; Personnel sub-committee; and Programme sub-committee, whose roles were to provide relevant information into the principal decision maker, the General Committee. A committee member preferred this style of decision making by stating, 'We have good sub-committees which bring and present information which we are processing all the time. Therefore, the people who are making the significant decisions are making them on sound advice and are working in smaller groups so that they can actually get the business done efficiently. Everything is well and truly explained in advance.

The working relationship between the co-ordinator and the management committee in a successful evening college

The working relationship between the co-ordinator and the management committee in the successful evening colleges tends to be based on trust and co-operation rather than division and disunity; synergism opposed to fragmentation; effective partnership and parity of esteem rather than passive subordination.

One viewpoint of the co-ordinators was that the relationship with their committee was a partnership based on trust and co-operation. Co-ordinator #4 felt that, 'The relationship is based on teamwork ...the committee and I work as a team and they are there for moral support ..they trust me with my decisions in many areas ...together we turn out a highly professional programme'. Co-ordinator #2 added, 'The relationship is a partnership. I have to maintain a partnership with the President as well as the committee and then that has to translate into a partnership with the staff'. The President of College #2 took the view that 'The management of our College has been a team effort. Our Co-ordinator makes the decisions involved in the day-to-day running of the College and the Committee looks at policy, overall future trends, developments and strategic issues'.

The non-successful colleges showed evidence of something short of total commitment to trust and co-operation. The Treasurer of College #3 was emphatic that he lacked confidence in making decisions in committee because of inadequate information provided. 'Certainly, I'm not totally confident. There is always just that little extra that perhaps should have been known in order to make decisions'. The key informant from the same college revealed that the committee was fragmented when she stated, 'There has been a bit of power play going on with some of the members...it has been messy'. The Treasurer from College #1 had observed that 'The committee should have more input into the management of the College. I think that too much is left to the Co-ordinator. Too much responsibility is placed on her which prevents her from doing other things. This causes a bit of distance between committee and Co-ordinator. On a separate point, both non-successful colleges had a history of cancelling occasional monthly meetings through the lack of a quorum'.

Suggested new model for management committees

Historically, the management committees of evening colleges have consisted of around twelve to fourteen members. This size of committee, added to the traditional method of recruiting new members, encourages mediocrity in the management process. The suggested new model is as follows:

- The General Committee to consist of no more than six members, namely: President, Treasurer, Secretary, and three others with appropriate expertise and interest in adult education.
- The creation of two sub-committees, (each of four members) 'Finance', and, 'Programmes' whose role it will be to provide advice and information to the General Committee.
- Members of the sub-committees to be recruited from suitable individuals involved in local industry and commerce.
- Meeting times of the sub-committees, rather than scheduled on a regular basis, should be held at times and venues convenient to the members.
- The Co-ordinator to be an ex-officio member of each of these committees.

Finding the right people to join adult education committees has always been a problem. Accordingly, it must be acknowledged that the success of any new management committee model will always rest upon first locating and then convincing the desired expert personnel to serve on the committee. If this difficulty can be overcome then this suggested new streamlined committee composition will certainly break with tradition and offer an opportunity to cross borders and break boundaries in the management of adult education.

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New education policy directions in South Africa: shifting the boundaries of worker education

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The construction of boundaries and struggles to break these down have enormous historical significance — literally and metaphorically — within the South African context. Under apartheid, black workers and their families faced formidable barriers to learning. During the growing anti-apartheid and labour struggles of the 1970s and 1980s, workers and students challenged these barriers by creating 'liberated zones' of 'alternative education' and in the process constructed an ideological 'battleline' between state-controlled Bantu education on the one hand, and People's or workers' education on the other.

This paper analyses the impact of new education and training policies on these historical traditions of worker education in South Africa. It suggests that new boundaries delineating the field of worker education have emerged, linked to new understandings of what constitutes knowledge, how knowledge is produced, where learning takes place, and how the social purpose of education is viewed. The analysis draws strongly on the educational sociology of Bernstein (1990, 1996), and makes use of concepts such as 'classification of discourse', 'models of pedagogy', 'recontextualisation' and 'forms of knowledge' in order to analyse shifting lines of stratification, shifting identities, ideological shifts and changing power relations in relation to worker education and the labour movement.

Worker education in the 1970s and 1980s

No education discourse is ideologically 'pure' or homogenous, and worker education in South Africa historically comprised numerous strands. While a large part of worker education has always focused on skills training in order to build organisational capacity, the dominant educational discourse of the 1970s and 1980s mirrored the militant, action-oriented and oppositional political character of the growing independent trade union movement in movement. A very brief account of this education discourse suggests some distinctive features.[1]

Forms of worker education were closely linked to the principles of building democratic, shop-floor organisation and workers' control. Education structures, with elected worker delegates, were seen as a means for workers to control their own education, and of building their confidence to directly influence wider social change. Worker education was perceived as taking place in a wide variety of formal, informal and non-formal sites, through a range of 'popular' publications intended for worker readership, and through a variety of cultural forms such as worker theatre or choirs. Valuable knowledge was also seen as being generated through the day-to-day struggles of workers in the workplace as well as through wider mass action. Close linkages were drawn between experience and knowledge production, and every worker was perceived as an educator, as illustrated by the popular slogan, 'Each one, teach one'[2] There was a self-conscious blurring of boundaries between 'mental' and 'manual' labour (every worker had some form of 'expertise' and knowledge about life and struggle) and between education, culture and struggle.

All these features contributed to a strong sense of self-identity of workers' education as distinct from 'bosses'' education on the one hand, and state-controlled 'Bantu' education on the other.

Worker education and the transition to democracy in South Africa

The momentous changes in the South Africa in the 1990s have found expression in attempts to break down racial barriers which historically blocked access by the black majority to skills, formal qualifications and upward occupational mobility. In order for the notion of access to have meaning however, boundaries must exist. This period has also seen the construction of new boundaries delineating 'what counts' as knowledge and learning, with the labour movement itself playing a key role in this process of boundary construction.

COSATU's[3] policies on worker education and training have been dictated by the perception that for the time being at least, the labour movement has no choice but to defer its long-term goal of socialist transformation and accept some of the consequences of South Africa's new form of insertion into the global capitalist economy. In an attempt to ensure that economic restructuring happens on terms favourable to workers, COSATU spearheaded the RDP[4] which foregrounds growth through redistribution of wealth and internal stimulation of demand.

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[1] A more lengthy account is given in Cooper (1996) while a detailed analysis of trade union education practices is given in Cooper and Qotole (1996).

[2] This slogan was also popular within the student struggles of the time. There was mutual 'borrowing' of elements of education discourse between the workers' movement and the student and civic movements of the 1980s.

[3] Congress of SA Trade Unions - the country's largest trade union federation

[4] Reconstruction and Development Programme

Worker education and training are central to the labour movement's economic strategy. COSATU's proposals are that workers should have access to lifelong learning opportunities based on a broad, basic education foundation and the development of flexible, transferable skills that will ensure 'horizontal' and 'vertical' mobility and the development of career-paths. A strong emphasis on RPL[5] aims to ensure that workers who have had little access to formal education in the past will enjoy access to learning and job opportunities. All education and training should be recognised by formal certification within a National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Within the new system, it is the NQF which will construct the new boundaries of knowledge and learning, while key 'border crossings' signifying learning progression will be the achievement of formal accreditation (ANC/COSATU 1993).

New discourses on workplace training have already found their way into unions' thinking about their own internal education, as illustrated by moves towards the institutionalisation of trade union education, and new emphasis on education being run on a more 'professional' basis, on formal accreditation (for example, of shop-steward training) and on 'career-pathing' for trade union employees. Already a number of unions have established collaborative agreements with higher education institutions to provide accredited courses for staff and shop-stewards.

The establishment of a national trade union education institute — DITSELA[6] — illustrates some of the contradictory pressures being experienced within the field of worker education. The aim of DITSELA is to 'empower workers, increase trade union capacity and enhance labour's contribution to political and economic democracy' (DITSELA, 1996). While part of DITSELA's identity is constructed by the older, collective discourses of 'worker empowerment', 'solidarity' and 'sharing of ideas and experiences', DITSELA is also under pressure to become the new accrediting arm of the labour movement.

Pressures pushing DITSELA towards formal accreditation include demands from membership, a view that accreditation may enhance the quality of union training and thus build organisational capacity, and a concern that workers' organisations should not be left out of the process of developing unit standards within the framework of the NQF.

On the other hand, there are concerns regarding the possible negative effects of formal accreditation including whether this might compromise the collective goals of trade union organisation, its class bias and political objectives; whether this process will undermine the shop steward system by introducing a competitive race for individual, upward mobility; and whether it might promote a movement of trade unionists 'upwards and out' of the union movement.[7]

This brief overview of the discursive shifts occurring in South African worker education suggest a confusing and contradictory situation, and the paper will explore this situation by focusing on two areas in more depth. Firstly, it will focus on the apparent contradiction between pressures on trade union education to become part of the NQF (suggesting a *dissolution* of previously defined boundaries of worker education), and pressures to formalise and institutionalise such training (which seem to suggest a *'hardening'* of such boundaries).

The second area of contradiction is presented by the complex mixture within current union discourse of the 'old' and the 'new'. On the one hand, the labour movement appears to have fully taken on board the new language of outcomes-based training, career paths, upward mobility and 'professionalisation' while on the other, it still appears to be committed to earlier values of 'respect for workers experience', 'sharing of knowledge', and 'collective empowerment'.

How do we account for, or make sense of these apparent contradictions? In an attempt to answer this question, the ensuing analysis draws on (what are for me) some valuable conceptual tools presented by Bernstein's educational sociology. Throughout this discussion, the emphasis will be less on the construction of new boundaries, and more on the displacement, relocation and reclassification of boundaries delineating the field of worker education.

'Strong and weak classification': constitution and dissolution of boundaries

Bernstein is critically concerned with the ways in which broader societal relations of power and control are achieved systematically through the 'local organisation of discourse'. Central to his understanding of power and identity is his notion of *classification* which refers to the degree of insularity or difference between discourses operating within a particular pedagogic field. He argues that the crucial space which creates the identity of a discourse is not internal to that discourse but is 'the space between that discourse and another' (Bernstein 1996, 20).

Drawing on this concept, worker education discourse of the 1980s can be seen as *strongly classified* in the sense that it was strongly demarcated from both the 'official' education discourse of the apartheid state and from the 'HRD' discourse of workplace training. What was the nature of this demarcation? One answer can be found in Bernstein's notion of two, contrasting models of pedagogy: the 'competence' model and the 'performance' model. Competence models of pedagogy assume three distinct modes: liberal/progressive, populist and radical. (Bernstein 1996, 64) All three are based on the concept of empowerment (cognitive, cultural or political empowerment respectively), all three emphasise active, creative forms of learning (within weakly classified pedagogic space and time), and they foregound 'invisible' forms of pedagogy and control. 'Performance' models of pedagogy on the other hand focus on 'output', are strongly bounded by space and time, deploy 'visible'[8] forms of pedagogy and control, and foreground hierarchy and grading. (Bernstein 1996, 58-63)

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[5] Recognition of Prior Learning

[6] Development Institute for the Training, Support and Education of Labour - meaning 'Pathways' in Sotho.

[7] 'Annexure B': submission by DITSELA director to COSATU Education Conference, November 1996: 2-3; in COSATU (1996)

It can be argued that worker education of the 1970s and 1980s (like 'people's education' in South Africa more broadly) represented a 'competence' model of pedagogy — particularly of the populist and radical kind. It was strongly differentiated from both state education as well as discourses dominant in 'HRD', both of which (I would argue) were dominated by 'performance' models of pedagogy[9].

The 1990s have seen the beginnings of a dissolution of boundaries between worker education on the one hand and the education discourses of both the new government and workplace training on the other. This process of dissolution is likely to increase significantly if trade union education becomes part of the NQF. To assess the significance of this, it is necessary to understand something of the pedagogic discourse underlying the NQF.

Muller (1996) argues that the NQF is a hybrid model, part competence- and part performance-based, with each component being driven by different social projects. On the one hand there is the union movement and its educational allies (with their 'populist' or 'radical' pedagogies) driving a project of social justice, redress and empowerment. On the other are the employers and post-Fordist education theorists promoting a market-oriented 'performance' pedagogy associated with the commodification of knowledge[10] and an emphasis on flexibility, mobility and re-trainability.

Muller is sceptical about whether such a hybrid model can work. It is also likely that in the long run, the impact of the global economy and pressures towards market responsiveness will mean an increasingly 'performance-dominated' NQF, with workers' training needs reduced to a reflection of the labour needs of capital. If trade union education chooses to locate itself within the boundaries of such a framework, its historical autonomy and distinct identity - bound up with a black, working class view of the world - may well be lost.

If 'what preserves the insulation (of a discourse) is *power*' (Bernstein 1996, 21), then the increasingly permeable boundaries of worker education suggest the weakening of the discrete social identity of the labour movement, and signal the weakening of the 'voice' of labour in relation to other key, social forces — in particular, that of big capital, and that of the growing black middle class. Within the labour movement itself, this process has been paralleled by a a shift in the locus of decision-making in unions from the 'grassroots' towards the upper leadership layers, and a weakening of traditions of worker democracy and control[11].

Forms of knowledge: 'hardening' of boundaries?

If the above suggests the 'blurring' of the boundaries of worker education, how then do we account for the apparent simultaneous 'hardening' of boundaries that are associated with moves towards formalisation and institutionalisation of worker education?

For Bernstein, another dimension that distinguishes different discourses is the *form of knowledge* characteristic of a discourse. Worker education of the 1970s and 1980s was characteristic of what Bernstein would describe as a 'horizontal knowledge structure'. It was oral-based, placed high value on 'everyday' knowledge and common sense (as expressed by the strong value placed on workers' experience), and foregrounded local, context-embedded forms of knowledge. (Bernstein 1996:, 170-72) Pedagogic methods favoured 'acquisition': knowledge was tacitly acquired through the very nature of involvement in trade union activity and worker struggle, or through various collective cultural practices. This discourse stressed inclusivity and equality: all workers — because of their experience of exploitation, organisation and struggle - were viewed as having something of value to offer.[12]

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[8] Both 'visible' and 'invisible' forms of pedagogy express relations of power and control between educator and learners; the difference is in whether these relations are implicit or explicit.

[9] While schooling was dominated by the study of academic disciplines (what Bernstein terms the 'singular' mode of this model), workplace training foregrounded the acquisition of generic skills underlying specific performances ('generic' mode).

[10] Bernstein stresses that within this discourse, knowledge *is* money (Bernstein 1996)

[11] See Keet (1992) and Collins (1994)

[12] Bernstein points out however that even in horizontal discourses there are still *rules* to acquisition: 'this doesn't

The 'hardening' of boundaries that is likely to accompany the formalisation and institutionalisation of worker education can be better understood as a *shift in knowledge form* from the traditional 'horizontal' discourse towards a 'vertical' knowledge discourse. In vertical discourses, knowledge systems are more hierarchically organised, they often have their own specialised languages and are more heavily text-based, and there are more explicit rules of access and acquisition.

The formalisation and institutionalisation of worker education within a more 'vertical' discourse of knowledge would almost certainly lead to new forms of differentiation and stratification amongst workers, and new forms of inclusion and exclusion. In the worker education discourse of the 1990s, new inclusions and exclusions may well be based on differences between a growing elite of trained workers, and the large numbers of untrained, casual or marginalised workers, between those who are 'inside' the NQF and those who are 'outside' of it. This is likely to be accompanied by an increased hardening of boundaries between 'experts' and 'ordinary workers', between (professional) educators and learners, and between the realms of education, culture and struggle.

'Recontextualisation' of knowledge and ideological shifts

The final part of this paper returns to the second area of apparent contradiction: the question of how seemingly opposing languages and ideological elements seem to sit side by side within current trade union education discourse.

One expression of this is the new value placed on using formal institutions as sites of trade union training which seems to contradict older principles of workers control over their own education. An extract from the report on COSATU's recent Education Conference shows the eagerness of unions to make use of technikons and universities who are scrambling to offer 'trade union' courses:

> We need to take the gap ... these institutions are searching for relevance ... (COSATU 1996, 8)

But another quote illustrates how unions are grappling to reconcile this with traditional notions of worker control of education:

> We also need to recognise our own strengths ... When we negotiate with other institutions we should not compromise on this quality, and should ensure that we maintain control over all aspects including facilitators. We should assert what we need, and the content that we want, and the manner in which we want the programme to run ... We also need to maintain our position about a class bias. This should be consistent with the principle that trade union education should be independent... (COSATU 1996, 8)

Can unions 'take the gap' in using new learning opportunities being offered by higher education institutions, yet still retain control over such education? One way of exploring this question is to turn to Bernstein's notion of 'recontextualisation' — a concept which is central to his understanding of patterns of domination and subordination between different pedagogic discourses. He argues that every pedagogic discourse involves the embedding of an instructional discourse (knowledge and skills) within a particular normative or value *context* (the regulative discourse), and that it is the *latter* which is crucial in giving character to the pedagogic discourse. (Bernstein 1996, 28)

This suggests that when trade union education — for example, training on the roles and duties of shop-stewards, or training around the new labour law — is carried out not by the union itself, but by a technikon or even by management (as is already the case in some unions), or if it is carried out within the individually competitive context of formal accreditation, although the content of instruction may still be determined by the union, the *pedagogic discourse changes*. New pressures to accredit worker education in South Africa, and new forms of delivery of union education could imply that it may no longer conveys its traditional values and goals — its *message* will no longer be the same.

Another form of expression of this contradiction is the way in which many elements of the worker education discourse of the 1980s remain an expressed part of the discourse of the 1990s. The following quote illustrates how the old language of 'struggle', 'worker participation' and 'campaign' sits alongside the new language of accreditation and standard-setting:

> ... we should not turn accreditation into a principle but rather we need to turn it into a struggle for accreditation that works for us ... standard generating is a terrain of struggle and must be taken forward. One needs to ensure that there is worker participation in all structures ... We also need to campaign for PETL. (COSATU 1996, 8)

Although contradictory discourses have always vied for dominance within labour movements, and opposing symbolic elements can and do sit in tension with one another, I would argue that it would be wrong to simply characterise the current discourse as a 'creative mixture of the old and the new', and that it seems important to analyse the shifts in ideological hegemony that underlie this process.

It is arguable that within the new context of the 1990s in South Africa — characterised by a spirit of negotiated compromise in tripartite and corporatist forums, and an environment which promotes

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mean that all are equally competent or that all have equal speaking rights'(Bernstein 1996, 171) competitive upwards mobility through 'black advancement' — the meanings of earlier trade union education principles has shifted. Thus 'experience' may no longer be viewed as a (shared) source of knowledge, but rather as a commodity which individuals may exchange for a qualification which promises to have value in a competitive labour market. The meaning of 'collective interest' which historically represented the goal of worker education is no longer defined primarily by race or class but has been reshaped by efforts to build a 'shared vision' of (politically neutral) economic development which will be 'of benefit to all'. And the meaning of 'worker empowerment' is increasingly being defined in relation to participative management, affirmative action and 'career pathing'.

Conclusion

Muller (1996) notes that it is difficult to assess the NQF critically as too often this is seen as 'raising objections to the social project (of egalitarianism and empowerment) guiding it' (Muller 1996, 2). However, this analysis has tried to show that the impact on 'worker pedagogy' of new discourses associated with the NQF have important implications for the identity of worker education, for relations of power and control over such education, and for broader ideological shifts within the labour movement, and it seems crucial that the lines of questioning raised in this paper get pursued further.

For those active in the field of practice of worker education, it is clear that the NQF is here to stay, and so the question arises: how can it be dealt with constructively? Bernstein argues that rather than seeing boundaries as *prisons*, we should view them as 'tension points condensing the past and opening possible futures....' (Bernstein, 1996: 6) The challenge facing worker educators seems to be how to hold on to what has been valuable to workers in the past, while at the same time engaging with the current framework as it evolves, so as to open up possibilities for genuine transformatory education in the future.

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Inferiorism in Scotland: the politics of literacy north of the border

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This paper focuses on the borders between dominant and subordinated literacies and the impact of these within the wider cultural (rather than merely geographic) borders between Scotland and England. We argue that the experiences and expectations of adult literacy students must be located within an analysis of the politics of literacy which, in the Scottish context, can best be understood in terms of a wider cultural inferiorism; in particular we are interested in the class and national processes which produce this. One implication of cultural inferiorism is the systematic and deep-rooted devaluation of indigenous, vernacular literacies. However, the revival of cultural politics within Scotland opens up possibilities for a more dialectical response to emerge which can challenge the dominant assumptions informing adult literacy practice.

There is a common approach to adult literacy education that embodies two contestable assumptions; the first is that literacy practices are neutral and the second is that there is only one literacy. Together they inform a powerful discourse of literacy that can be characterised as technicist; the key feature of this being that competence in literacy is associated with mastery of a set of skills and conventions for encoding and decoding communications. This formulation obscures the complex relationship between language, power and identity and implies that adults who fail to achieve competency are deficient in some way. In contrast, our focus is on the wider social and cultural processes which influence literacy use and its evaluation by adults.

We are interested in the impact of the dominant socially constructed literacy on the identities and literacy practices of social groups, their way of life and the values, beliefs and practices associated with them — in our case working class Scots. What we have to recognise, as Barton (1995, 39) has argued, is that that there are different literacies which are *'configurations of practices that serve different purposes'*. Moreover, the literacies are not equally valued and varying whose purposes they serve. *'Dominant literacies originate from the dominant institutions of society. Vernacular literacies have their roots in way life.*

The way in which vernacular literacies are excluded has a profound effect on the reinforcement of class-based relationships both between the community, the home and the school and within socially excluded communities as people internalise a sense of their own literacy practices as inferior. In Foucault's term dominant ideas of literacy reflect a 'regime of truth'(1985, 93) in which knowledge and power conic together with the effect of marginalising vernacular literacies *as partial* and inadequate. The capillaries within which this regime of truth circulates are varied and numerous, but clearly educational institutions are the prime conduit. This results in a particular cultural form, with its version of literacy, being universally and unquestioningly accepted and, as Street and Street argue, this literacy is:

> the variety associated with schooling [which] has come to be the defining type, not only to set the standard for other varieties but to rule them off the agenda of the literacy debate. (1991, 143)

Challenging the dominant literacy involves questioning class based, hierarchical notions of what constitutes 'good' and 'bad' language, high and low culture and imperial notions of the superiority of Standard English as a symbol of nationhood (see Hamilton 1996, 149).

The politics of literacy

Literacy is about shaping people, not just words; the literacy practices people develop in their everyday lives reflect and reinforce particular ways of life. Rather than being seen as a neutral, technical issue, acquiring literacy has to be located within the cultural politics of society. In these terms the privileging of school literacy has a number of problems when considering the development of literacy as an activity valued by people in their own community contexts. What is more, adult literacy initiatives often contrast themselves favourably with schools in terms of developing more relevant literacy work; what our experience suggests, to the contrary, is that what they have in common often outweighs the difference. This is particularly so in relation to the transmission of the dominant discourse of literacy which is assumed to be neutral.

Literacy education is contested terrain. 'Politicising' literacy provision could be used to address issues of power and representation, for example, by emphasising the need for social and political change to address communication-based inequalities. On the other hand literacy could be seen as a way of maintaining the status quo by functionally shaping responsible, moral and economically productive citizens through the gaining of the necessary skills to enable participants to become 'employable' (see Hamilton 1996, 145). The way in which literacy education is provided, therefore, is a political act; it has to be seen as an organic part of wider social interests and processes and be grounded in the actual practices of people if it is to be responsive to their wishes and desires. It cannot be detached from people's everyday lives and treated as if there was only one universal, neutral literacy, if radical change is to occur the curriculum has to be shaped by the interests and experiences of the participants. The literacy that comprises reading and writing words is, ultimately, an intrinsic part of a much larger literacy. the act of 'reading and writing the word and the world' (Freire and Macedo 1987).

Inferiorism: dinnae say dinnae

if we are to shift the problem of literacy from its technicist discourse we need to locate it within a wider cultural politics one that is sensitive to the way in which language and culture are intertwined and located within unequal relations of power. issues of literacy should be placed within a discourse of identity and the processes which influence and limit the way identities are socially constructed and valued. Language is crucial to the way we understand and see ourselves in relation to others; self esteem, membership and exclusion occur partly through language. Significant in the context we refer to, are experiences of class and nation — but clearly issues of 'race' and gender are important too.

By inferiorism Fanon (cited in Beveridge and Turnbull 1989) means those processes which bring people to distance themselves from, and devalue, inherited ways of life; their indigenous culture is rejected or accepted only in a diluted way. Instead, people embrace the values, styles and cultural ways of the coloniser. A key feature of this is the process of mystification. The coloniser depicts the subjugated culture as inferior and impoverished in relation to the culture of the coloniser — nothing of much value is claimed to arise from it. The treatment of Scots as poor English is a case in point. Another theme is the civilising nature of the coloniser's role; without their intervention and generally uplifting role barbarism is depicted as the only likely alternative outcome. *The strategy of inferiorisation is fully successful when the native internalises the estimation of culture which is propagated by the coloniser, acknowledging the superiority of metropolitan ways'* (Beveridge and Tumbull 1989, 6).

Delegitimating the languages and literacies of the colonised culture is a crucial part of the process of cultural domination. An extreme example of this occurred in 1993 in Edinburgh when a young man was jailed for contempt of court for repeatedly saying 'aye' when asked by the sheriff to say 'yes' or 'no'. This case highlights a visible way in which the dominant language serves to discriminate against the users of vernacular languages; the impact of less visible practices on the confidence and creativity of the indigenous population is probably greater and more widespread. Some evaluative research we undertook amongst literacy students showed that feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem were closely related to patterns of speech (reported on in Crowther and Tett 1996). As one of the participants interviewed stated: 'Ah *dinnae like the way I speak'.* Improving the confidence and self-esteem of literacy students must, therefore, include addressing the issue of language and power. In discussions the subject of language stimulated the most animated exchange. Not surprisingly, many considered the use of Scots words in their speech as inferior as the following remarks suggest:

> [referring to her child saying *'troosers'*] *'Can I say troosers? I say 'no it's trousers', but my friend says 'no, she's Scottish, let her speak as she wants'— but I try to teach her to speak properly. She'll learn more that way'.*

The relationship between language and power is clearly grasped in the following parent's comment:

> *When they grow up they need to know there is a right time and place to speak. When my girl goes for an interview I'd like to think she'd speak the way the person expects her to speak. That she doesn't go in and speak all slang. But if. she comes back and speaks slang that's fine.*

The assumption that there is a correct way to speak and that their children's speech is inherently inferior is evident in both comments. Yet there is also a recognition that the child's speech patterns are natural (Scottish), and adequate in a variety of contexts (at home, with friends). Both also recognise the way in which language and power may work in education ('she'll learn more') and in the material context of work (an interview for a job). What this indicates is that inferiorism is internalised but also questioned; there exists a residual feeling of the cultural worth of indigenous patterns of speech.

The internalisation of inferiority frequently occurs amongst adults in relation to literacy that is closely related to their own voice. For example,

> *Whit did ah think I the gem? Ah'll tell yi. Ah felt like greetin like a big wean. Wu've probly goat the best fitbaw players in the world — weet when thur playin in English jerseys that is. Ah dinnae ken whit it is bit the meenit the lads pit oan thay blue jerseys thir like a gang i lassies thit dinni ken whit a baw's fur. Thir playin fitbaw bit thir's nae fire in thum. Ah'm staunin here — prood — wavin the flag an the tartan scarf — an whit happens? Ah'll tell yi. The only lions aboot ur oan the terraces an oan the flags. Thay yins oan the pitch ur nutbin bit lambs — gittin the stuffin knocked oot i thum An efter it? Ah'm left staunin here in a dwam, watching ma hops run doon the gundy like the beer oot i that can.*
>
> *The international I went to on Saturday was disappointing. The Scottish team didn't play well*

and they didn't deserve to win.

These two quotes were taken from a language experience exercise conducted by an adult literacy tutor. They are from the same student: the first was produced by the tutor who faithfully wrote down the person's description of the football match; the second was produced by the student when asked to write about the match he had described. In the first quote the expressions are vivid, natural and personal; in the second, lifeless, dull, impersonal — the identity of the speaker is 'missing'. What is pertinent also is the fact that the tutor did not ask the student to write in the way he did — it was done 'voluntarily'. The internalised sense of inadequacy in his spoken language involved the writer in translating his voice into a very different one. This is not merely a technical exercise. In the process, part of the culture, the mood and desires which are so vividly present when spoken, are subjugated and rendered invisible. In his effort to acquire literacy the individual denies the opportunity for his own voice to be expressed.

What the above highlights is some of the tensions and contradictions experienced in literacy work in this context. Natural modes of expression are rejected as inappropriate by students who have internalised a sense of their own tongue as inadequate and inferior; *'what a bear in ma heid isnae what a've got tae bring oot a ma mooth'*, as one student expressed it. Whilst this process reinforces the identity and confidence of dominant groups the reverse also occurs; negative views about language are internalised and this has consequences for how people see themselves and serves to undermine their own self-esteem. To illustrate this, the literacy project studied by the authors, despite its stated intention to be relevant to the cultural context of the people and its location in an area where working class Scots was the language of the home and the community, adopted literacy practices that reproduced Standard English. Such English has a powerful ideological stranglehold on what we understand literacy to mean.

As the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum have pointed out, since Scots is the language of the home for many people, it provides speakers with their first awareness of themselves and their relationships. The linguistic form of the home and community is intimately connected with loved ones, community and personal identity. Use of the language also helps people to:

> *establish their own sense of values, and [is] closely involved in the development of thinking skills, and those related, equally important, worlds of feeling and social consciousness. Neglecting Scots has, therefore, unwelcome social and personal consequences.* (1996, 15)

Clearly, one of these unwelcome consequences is a message internalised by many that the language of their home and community is only of value within a very limited range of social contexts. If the contribution of communities and the richness of indigenous languages are unacknowledged then their culture is neutralised and objectified in a way that disguises its social and ideological character through processes that are represented as politically neutral. literacy thus contributes to the construction of a particular kind of citizen, a particular kind of identity and a particular conception of the nation through the privileging of one form of spoken and written communication (Street and Street 1991, 163).

The identities of the people who live in Scotland are marked and varied and have left a rich linguistic legacy. Our point is that such richness and diversity, and its influence on literacy practices, is obscured by a technicist discourse which is highly selective about the literacy it reproduces. The class nature of the dominant discourse is critical; it is in working class communities that inferiorism is often most clearly felt. Without a doubt speech is one of the most significant indicators of social class within a British context. Dominant ideas about the 'right' or 'correct' way to speak and (as a consequence) to write constitute a 'regime of truth' in which variations are 'other'; denigrated and devalued as dialects which deviate from the normal or standard pattern.

It was the emerging identity of the middle classes in the 19th century, as Williams (1961, 200) points out, that was decisive in defining what constituted Standard English;

'indeed, its naming as 'standard', with the implication no longer of a common but of a model language, represents the full coming to consciousness of a new concept of class speech' and this has meant that *'...thousands of people have been capable of the vulgar insolence of telling other Englishmen (sic) that they do not know how to speak their own language. And as education was extended, under mainly middle-class direction, this attitude spread from being simply a class distinction to a point where it was possible to identify the making of these sounds with being educated, and thousands of teachers and learners, from poor homes, became ashamed of the speech of their fathers (sic)'* (1961, 224). We would add the cultural dependency on England amplifies this process in a Scottish context. Working class Scots is intrinsically devalued because it suffers from being both alien (Scots) and working class; whereas more middle-class Scots is able to transcend some of the limitations of Scots by its class affiliation. The location of working class English speakers, and the labelling of their speech as dialects, indicates the cultural politics within England which inferiorises these speakers. The similar devaluation applied to English working class speakers is clear; what gives the Scottish predicament a sharper edge is

the fact that Scots once was one of the country's national languages.

Culture renewal and critical literacy: the dialectics of experience

The teaching of literacy can be seen, in Foucault's terms, as a process of disciplinary power in which literacies other than Standard English are delegitimated; they are accorded the status of subjugated knowledges which are partial and inadequate. Literacy agencies are involved in the process of normalising what constitutes literacy; they reaffirm and reproduce a particular literacy form as self-evidently valid. To our knowledge, with one notable exception (Cohen 1989), adult literacy work in Scotland ignores the varied and indigenous literacies of those they work with. The culture of the people, as expressed through their language, is denied and marginalised.

We do not wish, however, to argue that people should be denied access to dominant literacies or that their own vernacular literacy is somehow privileged. The hegemonic literacy of schooling clearly embodies the language of power; a language which systematically disadvantages working class and other communities. Some people are able to develop multi-literacy skills that enable them to move freely between vernacular and dominant literacies without disadvantage but we contend that these individuals are unusual and should not be treated as if they were the norm. What we are advocating is shifting the way the literacy 'problem' has been defined. This would involve a move away from a pathological, deficit view of individuals to one that recognised that some groups, classes and communities are at a disadvantage because of the embodiment of a particular literacy within the practices of dominant institutions. The social practices of institutions, and the literacy they reinforce, have to be made visible to show that they represent a selection from a wider range of possibilities — none of which are neutral. These practices then become a critical resource for learning and literacy.

The current conjuncture in Scotland is particularly interesting; there are centrifugal social, political and cultural forces which are challenging conventional assumptions. The recognition and confidence of a new tradition of Scottish writers using vernacular Scots, for example Kelman, Leonard, Lockhead and Irvine, are indicative of an emerging confidence and assertiveness of alternative cultural practices which reject, and actively resist, the dominant literary traditions of the metropolis. Political confidence and energy is also expressed through a growth in civic politics and social movements. It is not surprising that popular mobilisations of discontent emerged first in Scotland (the poll tax rebellion) and ignited similar protests elsewhere. The growth of civic movements which have transcended traditional party lines around issues of democracy and services have started a process of politicising experiences amongst new constituencies. For example, in 1996 over 40,000 people marched through Edinburgh protesting over cuts in services; what was interesting and surprising was the size of the march which was organised with little prior notice and less publicity. Furthermore, those involved were not 'all the usual suspects'; very few political and trade union branches were evident. It was ordinary people involved in a whole range of community groups, schools and local services and voluntary organisations that were voicing their discontent.

Conclusion

In the current conjuncture the 'resources of hope' for richer and more varied literacies to emerge is possible; enabling deeply embedded assumptions about what literacy is to be explored and challenged to help inform an alternative curriculum. Literacy programmes that help people to he true partners in their own learning involve paying attention to literacies that are culturally productive, through supporting the real life context of the communities in which they are located.

If vernacular literacies are unacknowledged or actively suppressed then coming to voice is particularly difficult; asserting the relevance and value of the literacies of the home and community helps to make clear the role of power in shaping our understanding of literacy. Literacy programmes could play a part in this struggle through a clear and proactive commitment to working class Scots and other marginalised cultures. This involves valuing, rather than denigrating, their difference from Standard English and starting from the subordinated knowledges of people's everyday uses, meanings and purposes for reading and writing. It also requires access to, and use of, the resources available in communities to support these practices. The dominant culture is not monolithic and this means that there are opportunities for resistance and contestation that recognise that there are many literacies and that none of them are neutral. Legitimating vernacular literacies as a resource for learning can enable the voices of excluded people to be heard rather than marginalised.

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From deschooling to reschooling adult literacy in Flanders: limitations to the mainstream model of adult basic education

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Today, adult literacy in Flanders (the northern, Dutch-speaking part of Belgium) is no longer a marginal activity, mainly supported by volunteers with improvised learning materials, but a respected institution in the field of education for adults, run by professional adult educators. The conception of literacy (education) has both changed in political and in theoretical respect during the last decades.

Comparing written documents of the early eighties and the nineties, we want to reflect critically on recent developments in the adult literacy field. We firstly argue that there has been a shift from a socio-cultural towards an economic function of literacy education. Further, in the defining of the targets of adult basic education (ABE) a 'deficit perspective' has been taken in. Thirdly, processes of institutionalisation and professionalisation have characterised the framework of ABE. These evolutions are questioned based on current research on literacy ('new literacy studies').

Finally we briefly relate the present-day model of ABE to current changes in late-modern society and we make an attempt at formulating alternatives in order to stress the pluriform character of ABE.

When illiteracy became a problem.

Before the end of the seventies, there was little adult literacy work in Flanders. Some isolated literacy courses for immigrant people were organised, together with a four-month literacy course for recruits of the Belgian army who had problems with reading and writing. We may say that neither in the public opinion nor among policy-makers, illiteracy was considered to be a problem of (a part of) the Belgian population.

Yet, a small radio programme in 1978, highlighting illiteracy problems of native Belgian adults, including the absence of a well-organised literacy provision (apart from the army), was the start for a literacy movement. The reactions of people who wanted to work as a literacy volunteer were numerous. As in other countries (UK, The Netherlands) non-governmental and welfare organisations played an important role in the awareness raising of the illiteracy problem. In the way the literacy movement presented the problem, different elements can be distinguished. We analysed documents from the early eighties and give here a short overview of their viewpoint.

Reading the word to read the world

Illiteracy is explicitly treated as a *societal problem*. Not the individual who failed to learn, but the social system the adults grew up in, is indicated as the main cause. Therefore, adult literacy work may not be limited simply to teaching technical skills of how to read and write. Adult educators need to pay attention to the total context of the learner's problems. Adherents from the literacy movement insisted that literacy education for adults had to play a *critical role*. At the heart of their engagement laid a *resistance to traditional schooling*, which was oriented towards knowledge transfer. In relation to this resistance, adult literacy education had — joining the ideas of Freire — to be emancipatory and experiential group based learning (Alfabetisering Antwerpen 1984). In line with the deschooling idea, the *role of volunteers* was strongly emphasised, arguing that they could guarantee a democratic, non-alienating educational process, carried by the community. In its early phase, the Flemish literacy movement received temporary funding from the *Ministry of Culture*. The role of the government was limited to the provision of funds.

Literacy education as training basic skills

Today, one does not speak any longer about literacy work, but about adult basic education. Since the 'Decree on Basic Education' in 1990, literacy education for adults takes place in Centres for Basic Education, which offer an integrated and coherent provision for lowly schooled adults. The VOCB (Flemish Co-ordinating Body for Basic Education) recently elaborated a publication in which it is argued that a common conceptual framework is very important for further quality improvement in the ABE course offer (De Keyzer 1994). Below we present a short summary of their statements.

The *societal function* of ABE is to (better) equip lowly schooled adults with the basic skills necessary for functioning in multiple aspects of social life, with a special attention to the basic skills needed on the labour market. ABE is essentially an '*educational project*': it is directed to the teaching and improving of literacy, numeracy and social skills (De Keyzer 1994, 19). ABE is not only a basic provision leading to the acquisition of necessary basic skills. The Co-ordinating Body categorically stresses the *channelling function* of ABE: lowly schooled adults are being directed to other training and education schemes. This function will be extremely important with regard to increasing attempts to co-ordinate the entire field of education for adults (De Keyzer 1994, 20).

Literacy as a social critical practice?

One glimpse at the contours of adult literacy education in both 1984 and 1994, makes clear that the field has profoundly changed.

Before considering more in detail some aspects of this evolution, it is important to say that the above mentioned statements are formulated by people with a co-ordinating function in the adult literacy field. Of course, they do not always voice the opinions of local adult educators. In the early eighties as at this moment, there is a *wide diversity* among people working on the literacy field for adults. Some examples may make this clear. Although *in the early years* of the literacy movement volunteers in principle played an important role, in practice they were often reduced to assistants of professional adult educators. Very soon tensions were felt between people who advocated more professionalism and people who did not. A pro argument was that paid professionals ensure continuity and quality and that a further methodological development was necessary to guarantee literacy education as a basic right. Next to the professional — volunteer debate, also 'autonomy' was a controversial issue. People who advocated more autonomy (independent organisations or institutions for adult literacy) wanted more say in literacy matters and wanted to free literacy work from the influence of the 'mother organisations'. They further argued that the particular problem of adult illiteracy calls for a specific approach. Opponents of this position however, feared the risk of fragmentation (specialisation in literacy and numeracy) at the expense of a more global approach. They considered illiteracy as only one factor in a whole range of disadvantages. An integrated approach was thought to be necessary. Separate institutions for illiterates were considered to have a stigmatising effect. *Today*, there are tensions between the orientations of the Co-ordinating Body VOCB and the ideas of some local adult educators. There are centres for basic education that are more willing to follow the propositions of the VOCB than others and of course, in one centre there are people who are more critical vis-à-vis current developments in their field than others. The adult literacy field — as other sectors — is not a monolithical field! Surely, a study of documents does not (always) show this diversity. Therefore, other ways of data collection are needed. In interviews with people from the literacy field we learned that the new policy on adult education guarantees more financial means (and so also stability) and clarity for the learners, but that grassroots' developments and creativity are discouraged. A local adult educator said that 'the folks above' are too theoretical, that they do not know the reality of the adult learners (unemployment, personal problems). Someone else criticised the lack of critical perspective: fundamental questions (such as 'why do we do this literacy work?', 'do we reach the people who it is set up for?') are no longer asked.

With reference to the sketched silhouettes of adult literacy education in two eras, we now will try to question the changes in the field. We would like to relate this debate to some of the theoretical positions outlined in what has come to be called the 'New Literacy Studies' (NLS) in recent years (Gee 1990; Street 1993, 1995). Of central importance is the assumption that 'literacy is always multiple, always tied to social practices that include much more than reading and writing, and is inherently ideological' (Gee 1990, xx). What concrete consequences can be deduced from this general assumption?

- Comparing the *(societal) function* of adult literacy education, we may say that there has been a shift from a stress on the *socio-cultural function* towards the *economic function* of literacy education.

Both in the early eighties and nowadays, adult literacy education was considered as a means to cope better with everyday circumstances. In both times, however, this was understood differently. *In the eighties* the functions (Cramer 1993) of adult literacy education from the *government's* point of view were: emancipation of disadvantaged groups, stimulation to cultural participation, the prevention of a dual society. From an *individual's* point of view, literacy education was meant to remedy individual educational deficits, to foster personal development and to increase one's social contacts. *Today*, the main function is to equip adults with the *basic skills* needed in social life, especially *professional life*. Because of a new socio-economic and political climate (high unemployment, high welfare costs ...) the function is now (often implicitly) an economic one. The *government* considers adult literacy education as an investment in human capital, as a part of the struggle against unemployment and as a means to stimulate people to keep up with technological renewal. An increased number of *adult learners* are considered to see adult literacy education as a way to improve their job performance and career options, to enhance their chances to find a job or to prevent unemployment. Literacy and ABE are thus increasingly seen as an instrument to create opportunities for individuals to enter the labour market. 'Basic skills' is what makes the difference. People who do not dispose of these skills are considered to be at risk.

Hull (1993, 34) warns that we have to be aware of the bias produced by economic rationality in ABE which makes that 'skills are listed as abstract competencies and represented as context-free and universal'. She argues that emphasising the economic function of basic skills is often based on the largely unquestioned beliefs that 'there are clear links among illiteracy, poor job performance, and the declining economy' (Hull 1993, 20). Literacy, in the sense of basic skills, becomes a symbolic key to important societal problems: unemployment, underachievement, isolation. These problems are turned into questions about why individual adults refuse to learn the necessary basic skills, 'thus diverting blame from institutions to individuals, from power structures to personal morality' (Street 1995, 125). We might say that the economic discourse is fallacious because it promises (better) jobs and social participation, once the workers or unemployed have acquired the necessary basic skills. Yet, this 'partial picture of reality' ignores the crisis in the labour market, the structural lack of a job for everyone, the growth in poverty (Hautecoeur 1996, 79):

- Together with a change in the societal function of literacy education, a shift in (the definition of) the *target group* took place.

Comparing the two periods, we also noted that the power over the definition of the problem (group) has shifted. In 1984 we read: 'people who *feel limited* in their social functioning because *they find* they cannot read and/or write (well enough)' (Alfabetisering Antwerpen 1984, 3-4). The target group then mainly were disadvantaged people with a very poor schooling background. In 1994 ABE is operating for '*adults who lack* the necessary basic skills *to function adequately* in society' (De Keyzer 1994, 20).

It seems as if ABE considers the adult learners predominantly as individuals who lack skills. Hence, ABE decontextualises the whole issue of illiteracy and unemployment and emphasises the helplessness and dependence of the learners. A small study by A. Fingeret (1983), exploring the social structures illiterate adults create, and their relationship to notions of dependence and independence, shows that basic skills are not always essential for many adults. Fingeret argues that adult basic educators continue to define their student populations in terms of incompetence although this 'deficit' perspective is under attack in a variety of social science studies. Yet, most of the illiterate adults she studied, did not necessarily see themselves as dependent simply because they lack reading and writing skills. Rather, they were part of social networks characterised by reciprocal exchange. 'Networks offer access to most of the resources individuals require, so that it is unnecessary to develop every skill personally' (Fingeret 1983, 134). Adults who preserve their independence tend to have strong inner social networks typified by mutual exchange relations. Only a very small number in the study is considered dependent. They 'have inner networks that are asymmetrical; there is not a reciprocal exchange' (Fingeret 1983, 140). She emphasised that it was not illiteracy itself that made them dependent, although it was a part of the dependence. Literacy contributed but was not the cause (Barton 1994, 201).

This research contradicts the assumption that illiterate adults cannot function competently in a society dominated by literate culture and traditions. The data from this study underline the *importance of social networks* and show that adults enrol in literacy programmes when their social networks are *in flux*, due to factors such as new children, new jobs, new geographic locations or the changing status of network members. Fingeret (1983, 145) concludes that 'educators must become involved in the social networks of illiterate adults and must recognise that the development of literacy skills, even for one individual, entails a broader process of social change'.

- Looking back with a comparative eye, we state that *volunteers*, with a strong *resistance towards traditional schooling*, have been replaced by *professional* adult educators, who perform basic education in specialised *schoolish institutions*.

The literacy *movement* has become a basic skills *provision*, processes of professionalisation and institutionalisation have characterised this evolution. On a policy level, adult literacy has moved from the Ministry of Culture, Family and Welfare to the Ministry of Education.

We might say that illiteracy has no longer been considered as a complex social phenomenon that should find a solution on a broad policy-making level but has been reframed as a narrow, educational problem. For adults (as for children alike), a link has been established between literacy and pedagogy. 'By means of this linkage, literacy itself comes to be viewed and practised within a framework of learning, teaching and schooling' (Street 1995, 103). The emphasis in ABE (on the national level) is now mainly on technical problems of acquisition such as quality (of the course offer), teacher performance (obligatory participation to training schemes), testing and evaluation, approaches to writing instruction and on the 'neutral' concept of basic skills. Street (1995) shows that this approach disguises the ideological role of literacy (the political and economic interests of those imparting it) in contemporary society.

Literacy need not be associated with schooling, with institutionalised processes of teaching and learning. Current literacy theories show that literacy practices are also embedded in other social institutions. Reading and writing skills and conceptions about literacy as well are specific to the (political, ideological) context in which they are used. It is illustrated that the consequences of literacy vary according to different situations. 'This does not lead us to abandon attempts to spread and develop the uses and meanings of literacy: it does force us to question whether the current framework in which such activities are conducted is the most fruitful '

(Street 1995, 24).

ABE in a late-modern risk-society

Above, we have critically considered the institutional and ideological framework of ABE.

Summarising, we may say that the privileged model of ABE is characterised by increasing processes of *centralisation* (all local literacy programmes — in order to obtain state funding — have to fit in an integrated organisational framework) and *standardisation* (ABE is part of the larger system of education for adults, takes place in specialised centres and emphasises unity in pedagogical concept and methods). The acquisition (training) of *basic skills*, referring to the qualifications people need for effective functioning in the community (especially the fast changing labour-market), is of central importance. We conclude that this model of ABE reinforces *uniformity* and has narrowed its orientation from a societal function towards an *economic utility*.

As one can conclude, we believe the current framework is not the most fruitful one. Especially when considering this model in the light of the characteristics of late-modern risk-society. Casually referring to the work of well-known authors in this domain (Giddens, 1994, 1995; Beck, 1986), current society is characterised by processes of 'de-traditionalisation': familiar social institutions such as the traditional family, classes and ranks, gender roles, moral values loose their self-evident character. The experience of risk, insecurity and unpredictability becomes a common feature of human life. Processes of both individualisation and globalisation strengthen this experience. In short, individualisation means that the individual, freed from traditional ties, becomes the author of her/his own course of life. Working at the own identity, the individual experiences a permanent thread of instability. Yet, at the same time individualisation involves new forms of social control and integration. Globalisation means that abstract systems (such as expert-systems of financial systems) increasingly exert an influence on a world-scale.

These characteristics and others again question the way literacy education is currently organised. The crisis in labour and employment makes that having a fixed job for everyone is no longer assured. Does it make sense then that ABE continues to defend the idea of basic skills-training as an 'employment insurance' (Hautecoeur 1996, 66)? Do we have to go on preparing people for regular careers?

A multiplicity of learning sites and learning forms

ABE in the sense of 'training basic skills' is inspired by a traditional notion of literacy which isolates learning from people's social context and biography. If ABE pays too much attention to the integration of basic skills in one's personal skills repertoire, other dimensions such as biographical integration and social integration might be neglected. Illiterate adults often have other and more important difficulties such as poor housing, health problems, lack of self confidence... These problems are not directly addressed by a basic skills-approach. Many adult educators however know that in their 'literacy courses' there is more at stake than the skills-acquisition business. They see that people try to keep the narrative going of their own life course, when trying to find answers to the disturbances they cope with (biographical integration), and that they want to meet other people and if possible, establish new relationships and friendships in the context of work, family life and leisure time (social integration). Yet, the necessary multidimensional character of everyday ABE practice is not reflected in the official vocabulary of current ABE rationale.

In our search for viable alternatives for the narrow educational carcass in which ABE is now embedded, we do not want the consider the adult learner as an individual to whom maximum opportunities for personal development should be offered. The adult learner also has to be considered as a member of a community who takes responsibility for that community in different contexts of life: work, leisure, family life, social, cultural, religious and political movements. In such contexts, adults are not primarily approached as deficient citizens, but as responsible actors.

In order to really challenge the economist 'deficit perspective, it would be great if literacy education could take place in a variety of public spheres, including schools[1]. '... we need to find ways of using multiple approaches, styles, aesthetics, and forms of engagement to reach diverse audiences'. 'Knowledge and power come together to shape experience and presuppose different versions of the past, present and future in a variety of locations, whether they be the workplace, the day care centre, the local church, youth centres, hospitals, movie studios, television programs. ...' 'In fact, it might be argued that the most important sites of learning today encompass both television and radio airwaves' (Giroux 1997).

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[1] Such an orientation not necessarily invalidates the achievements of a well-organised and professionalised institution of ABE. On the contrary, we are convinced that these achievements very well match with continuous attempts to question the often unintended assumptions and effects of institutionalised action.

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Globalisation and a pedagogy of (dis)location

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Although wary of over-arching explanatory forms — post-industrial society, the learning society, postmodernity — the growth in explanatory significance of 'globalisation' cannot easily be ignored. There is now much reference to it in both the academic domain and the more public domain of the popular media. To a lesser extent, this is also true of discussion in education although here the emphasis has tended to be on the significance of open and distance learning as a response and contributor to globalising influences (Edwards 1994, Evans 1995) and the role of international organisations such as the OECD in global policy transfer (Henry *et al.* 1996). Important though this is for the education and training of adults, there has been little explicit discussion of the significance of globalisation for educational practitioners in this field and the opportunities which it opens up for adults.

Central to the contemporary processes of globalisation are new forms of economic organisation and the spread world-wide of cultural messages through new information and communications technology (Edwards and Usher 1997, Edwards 1997). Globalisation is responsible for and responsive to space-time compression where distances can be covered far quicker than in previous times and people, goods and images are available to each other on an almost instantaneous basis. Space-time compression therefore foregrounds the significance of place and location. Even as there are processes of de-territorialisation and the growth in consciousness of the globe as one place — a global village — there is paradoxically, at the same time, a heightened consciousness of the relativity of place and an assertion of the local and the specific (Giddens 1990). The bringing together of different people and cultures through the flow of images, goods and services surfaces the locatedness of each and all and highlights the significance of location in interpreting the contemporary condition. This is mirrored across the social sciences in recent times where for example new forms of geography have been developed and the need has been asserted for a sociology of space and location (Urry 1995).

In this paper we argue that globalisation is having profound effects on conceptions of what constitutes 'learning' and therefore on the education and training of adults. We will explore some of the effects of globalisation and in particular, the potential offered by the emergence of 'location' as a central interpretive metaphor in reconfiguring a notion of pedagogy that resonates more clearly with contemporary trends. Issues of position, borders, and boundaries are now becoming part of the framing of pedagogical questions and the importance of location in contemporary educational practices is apparent in many recent discussions. Spatial metaphors such as border crossing (Giroux 1992), speaking from the margins (Spivak 1993), spanning the abyss (Elam 1994), occupying in-between spaces (Bhabha 1994) have emerged to characterise educational and other cultural practices, particularly in critical and feminist pedagogy influenced by poststructuralist and postmodern theory. Increasingly problematised notions of positionality and voice in relation to power and authority have proved fecund areas of debate (Luke 1996) and in discussions of open and distance learning, the choreographing and performance of the absence-presence of the tutor in the 'dance' of pedagogy has been explored for its interpretive possibilities (Evans 1989, Evans and Green 1995).

However, these conceptions have largely developed to articulate what is necessary for forms of critical-emancipatory practice and to examine how despite the growth of liberal-progressive pedagogy (or perhaps because of it) these practices still continue to have disciplinary effects in the sense that people are still 'being kept in their place'. They are conceptions which are more aptly understood as relating to forms of *re-location*. What we want to suggest, in contrast, is that the increased emphasis given to location can itself be located in contemporary globalising trends where forms of location — of positioning and of being positioned — also and inevitably entail forms of dislocation — of disidentifying and being positioned as other. We therefore wish to outline an argument that the term '(dis)location' provides a useful, non-essentialising metaphorical resource through which to analyse, understand and develop changes in pedagogy in conditions of globalisation. Such a pedagogy may be more ambivalent than that offered in much critical-emancipatory and feminist pedagogic debate. This is why we have used the term '(dis)location' with the bracket signifying that location and dislocation are simultaneous moments that are always found together. It also points to the dynamics of (dis) location which both refuses a privileging of particular locations and voices and accepts the inherent power/knowledge dynamics of all pedagogic situations. Furthermore, we become alerted to 'mapping' and 'translation' as significant capabilities in negotiating the complexity of contemporary times. A pedagogy of (dis)location may therefore signify an ambivalent pedagogy or a pedagogy of ambivalence in the uncertain reconfigurations taking place under conditions of increased globalisation.

Before exploring this notion of pedagogy more thoroughly, we wish to outline briefly some of the more general implications of globalisation for adult education which we believe gives rise to the possibility and power of such a pedagogy.

Globalisation and education

Whilst globalisation is not a new phenomenon, its significance has been radicalised in the contemporary period by the development of information and communication technologies which make possible and intensify processes of space-time compression (Harvey 1991). In the wake of the greater economic and cultural integration thereby made possible, there has been an increased threat to the traditional sense of space and location coupled with a foregrounding of their increased significance.

We have suggested that globalisation has the paradoxical effects of universalising certain tendencies whilst at the same time giving rise to an assertion of the particular and the local. The consciousness of the globe as one place is the very consciousness which heightens a sense of the relativity and value of particular location(s). In some ways, this paradox is at the heart of education as a practice centred on canonical and bounded bodies of knowledge. Educational practices are primarily formulated within the universal legitimising discourses or grand narratives of modernity — narratives of individual and social betterment resulting from the development of scientific knowledge. They justify the work of producing bodies of knowledge, held to be universal in scope which transmitted through certain pedagogical forms within educational institutions provide a training in a particular form of rationality which is yet held to be universally applicable.

The export of such practices and their continuing influence in the post-colonial era are evidence of these universalising tendencies. At the same time, these practices have been fundamental in the role assigned to education of nation-state building, of transmitting the messages and values of national culture. Here opposition is suppressed and only certain possibilities for knowledge have been privileged which inevitably exclude others (bodies of knowledge and bodies of people) from inclusion. There has been therefore an inherent tension in the universal messages of education, the particular bodies of knowledge transmitted and their development in specific national cultures. Here 'borders do not offer the possibility to experience and position ourselves within a productive exchange of narratives' (Giroux 1992, 55), but privilege certain positions as universal, thereby excluding those narratives which do not fall within legitimate boundaries and bounded legitimacy.

This tension is radicalised by contemporary processes of globalisation wherein the flow of people, images and services surfaces difference and the particular as against fixed identity and the universal, thereby challenging notions of specifically national cultures and canonical bodies of knowledge. Diversity impacts upon learning settings and is reflected within them. Here 'local diversity and global connectedness not only mean that there can be no standard; they mean that the most important skill students need to learn is to negotiate dialect differences, register differences, code switching, interlanguages and hybrid cross-cultural discourses' (NLG 1995, 9). Rather than education as a practice working under a unifying logic of identity, it becomes rather an exploration of communities of difference.

However, perhaps more tellingly, globalisation results in and from an increased economic integration within a framework of the market, and with this the emphasis on education transmitting a national culture becomes displaced by a focus on education's role in servicing the global economy wherein each nation is embraced by the logic of competitiveness. Educational practices therefore come both to service and contribute to the intensifying processes of globalisation. We can see this in for instance, the growth and development of open and distance learning, the increased emphasis on computer-mediated learning, the development of international markets by educational institutions, the emphasis on non subject-specific generic and transferable capabilities and the prevalence and spread of English as the medium for the curriculum. We also witness the other side of globalisation in the reassertion of regional, racial, religious and gender identities which both subvert and cut across national identity, even as some continue to assert the primacy of the nation-state. Here there is not one single voice or logic which prevails, but an increasing cacophony more resonant of Laurie Anderson than Mozart.

Bounded canons of knowledge and their transmittal in traditional forms of pedagogy become problematic when globalisation displaces 'universalism' as a way of framing practices. Where universalism homogenises, globalisation diversifies. There can no longer be a presumption as to what constitutes an 'education' or an 'educated person'. Bodies of knowledge themselves become subject to 'infolding' as their boundaries are challenged and new forms of inter- , cross- and trans-disciplinarity emerge. Traditional forms of pedagogy are subverted by the spread of electronically mediated networks of learning. There is a foregrounding of the location of education in specific cultural matrices and of the flows of people, ideas and practices which give rise to an unequal plurality of identities and possibilities. Bodies of knowledge and culture from around the globe are made available for use in learning settings, providing the possibility not only for new meanings, but also new ways for meaning to emerge. The development of new information and communication technologies provides for 'an increasing multiplicity and integration of significant modes of meaning making, where the textual is also related to the visual, the audio, the spatial, the behavioural' (NLG 1995, 3). As the space and time of pedagogy become restructured and transformed, so too learning becomes more decentred, disseminated and non-hierarchical (Taylor and Saarinen 1994).

The questioning and possibilities for meaning making raised by processes of globalisation are reflected in and reinforced by the workings of power/knowledge in discursively positioning subjectivities; a positioning which is also a location of multiple and conflicting identities, with an ensemble of diverse discourses through which identity is narrated (Edwards and Usher 1997, Usher *et al* 1997) and where 'identities have multiple layers, each layer in complex relationship to the others' (NLG 1995, 12). Leitch (1996, 137) argues that that 'the multiple subject positions constituting subjectivity casts the self as neither unified nor fixed, but as a layered site of conflict and contradiction, where submission as well as resistance to socio-historical representations are negotiated'. Feminist writers influenced by the work of Foucault, Derrida and other poststructuralists have been to the fore in exploring the constraints and possibilities of an identity politics framed within a logic of difference. However, we are suggesting that in the context of globalisation individuals need to rethink the relationship between identity and difference in terms of a location or positionality in which the global and the local are always co-implicated and in which inherent in adopting a location is the recognition that one is dislocating or disidentifying other possibilities. Rose (1996, 146), for example, argues that we now need to counterpose a *spatialisation* of being to the emphasis given to a narrativisation of being.

There is another aspect to canons of knowledge and traditional forms of pedagogy becoming problematic in contemporary conditions. The most dominant pedagogical form is still one which privileges the transmission and mastery of a body of knowledge. This is a form where 'authority' plays a central part — the authoritiative teacher ('the one who knows'), authoritative knowledge and the acceptance by the student of authoritative methods. The question is: what happens when this emphasis on 'authority' is rendered problematic, when knowledge, pedagogy and the teacher are no longer seen as authoritative? This question assumes a vital significance in conditions of globalisation and postmodernity for it could be argued that it is precisely in these conditions, characterised by disorganised schooling, epistemological uncertainty and electronic textuality (Morgan and McWilliam 1995), that this authority is subverted. We are witnessing changes both in the nature of the 'goods' (that is, knowledge) being delivered and in the mode of delivery (pedagogy) whether this is on a face to face basis, over distance, or on-line.

Thus as we seek to think education differently through the discourses of globalisation, so different notions of education start to emerge. It is here that we turn explicitly to the possibilities for a pedagogy of (dis)location.

A pedagogy of (dis)location

At one level, a pedagogy of (dis)location is a meta-discourse that foregrounds the positioning of learners in relation to the possible positions available in a range of discursive practices which are neither homogeneous nor static. Any location is simultaneously a dislocation from other positions. Pedagogy therefore becomes a process of constant negotiation where what is central is not the fixed position (a state of being) but the active state of becoming that is an integral feature of the process of positioning — 'the experience of the movement between positions' (Frith 1996, 110). This also requires, as we mentioned above, the ability to translate between different locations, to shift and move and negotiate the uncertainties and ambivalences of the contemporary condition, an aspect of which is the very uncertainty of identity and location. Here there is an endlessness to the processes of teaching and learning (Elam 1994) of which the increasing calls for lifelong learning are a signifier. Thus even as the education of adults becomes more central in response to processes of globalisation, it becomes reconfigured as lifelong learning with new texts and new ways of meaning making which challenge traditional conceptions of its role, values and purposes, as new settings and a wider groups of practitioners enter the terrain of pedagogical work with adults. So even as we suggest that (dis)location may be central to pedagogy in conditions of globalisation, processes of (dis)location also impact upon the hitherto bounded field of adult education, de-differentiating the borders and opening up a 'moorland' of lifelong learning where adults are more aptly seen as de-territorialised 'learners' rather than firmly located 'students'. It is perhaps also worth remembering that pedagogy has been discursively constructed by means of fixed conceptions of time and space most obviously embodied in the timetable — and this has been the case not only with didactic forms but also with experiential and critical-emancipatory forms. The very notion of a 'course' that takes place at a fixed time with pre-defined starting and end points and within fixed designated spaces is significant and increasingly problematic as space is restructured and time transformed with the impact of globalisation.

At another level, a pedagogy of (dis)location by framing actual pedagogical practices in a different way, offers a greater possibility of becoming reflexive about the range of (dis)locations available and possible in specific contexts. For instance, drawing on Pecheux (1982), we can examine the ways in which (dis)location is manifested in processes of: identification through which learners 'consent' to images available to them; counter-identification through which learners turn the meanings consented to by others back on to them; and disidentification, of working on and against prevailing practices. Within the complex matrices of pedagogic practices, all three processes might be at work at both a group and individual level with learners negotiating the ambivalence of the multiple locations — material and discursive — available to them.

It may be thought that such a pedagogy may contribute further to the individualising processes currently at work and undermine the possibilities for collective learning and endeavour as difference is asserted over shared circumstances and interests. This is indeed possible. However, it is not necessary, although it does reframe such endeavours away from a base in a universal shared ontological condition — the working class, women, etc. — to senses of community based in 'groundless solidarity'. The latter could be understood as shifting coalitions 'brought together on the basis of shared ethical commitments but [which] make no claim to inclusiveness' and which are continually destabilised by 'the difference contained within and without' (Elam 1994, 109).

A further dimension of a pedagogy of (dis) location is that it highlights the neglected performative and embodied aspects of such work — the staging of the pedagogical event. In formal settings where teachers and learners are physically present, the positioning of each specific ways is an expression of power and authority enabling specific possibilities for knowledge, discourse and practices. An example of this is the lecture where as Luke (1996, 286)) points out 'authority and power are semiotically framed by the privilege of position at the raised lectern, the amplified voice, the lights focused on the speaker'. Even within less formal arrangements and settings, the positions of teacher and learner are not divested of these dimensions of performance, power and authority but are simply manifested in different ways. In forms of open and distance learning, the performance may be disembodied but is nonetheless still a performance in what Evans and Green (1995) refer to as 'telepedagogy', where the location of the exchange may involve more clearly a range of positions as learners try to establish a space for learning in a context where their other practices are often impacting upon them more directly.

Endless learning

The above is suggestive of a reconfiguration of both the discourse and practice of pedagogy, located in relation to contemporary trends in globalisation. In a sense it is itself part of a process of positioning which we intend to explore further in the future. We feel the spatial metaphors so prevalent in contemporary discussions of pedagogy to be both consequent upon, and contributing to, globalisation processes. We also believe that the notion of (dis)location has the potential to offer a means of negotiating the two sides of the paradox of the universal and the particular, and the endlessness of learning, positioning and repositioning which this implies. In formulating a pedagogy of (dis)location the very locatedness of the subject, in both senses, is foregrounded, thereby offering a framework for reconceptualising pedagogy in globalised conditions. In this sense, it is itself a pedagogy of breaking boundaries and crossing borders with which colleagues may identify, counter-identify or disidentify.

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Learning to learn: creating models of transformative education with economically disadvantaged women

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This paper describes the first year's work on a three year study of the process of women's personal empowerment through transformative education. In the project Transformative Learning Communities in Popular Education (TLCPE), we are researching the application of transformative learning theory as a catalyst for self-empowerment with 60 women who are in transition from homelessness to self-sufficiency. Beginning in September, 1996, 34 women have formed into five voluntary learning communities in four transitional housing programmes located in three cities in southwestern United States. Each group meets monthly and is facilitated into learning a method of critical reflection on experience, an educational intervention entitled Learning to Learn (LTL). The facilitators are three PhD graduate students in Transpersonal Psychology, another adult educator, and ourselves. Simultaneously we, the initiators of the project, have been conducting personal interviews with the women involved, gathering data on their experience of themselves as change agents in this transition time in their lives.

Data from the interviews has identified initial factors which need to be further validated with the women, namely change motivators which foster empowerment and conflicts presenting obstacles to empowerment. In addition, the journaling and recording of the researchers over the year has raised important questions for further reflection regarding the role and function of the facilitators in this educational process. Here we attempt to give you a glimpse of the story of both the educational intervention (LTL) and the research methodology and findings.

Collaborators in the project

Maria is a 37 year old mother of three children: 19 year old son; 8 and 5 year old daughters. The father of Maria's first child was killed in an accident and she remarried at 24. Maria is from a traditional Hispanic background, very connected to her extended family. She divorced her husband after 13 years of marriage, when his battering had become increasingly severe and had begun to include the children. She is the only person in her family to divorce, and the family strongly disapproved. Although the women of the family encouraged her to leave her husband, their husbands are now threatened by her independence and she is not welcome in their homes. Maria went into a shelter and sought some government assistance after she found herself homeless with her children. She had never worked outside the home and had not finished high school. She had been a wife who was socialised to do what her husband and the men of her family expected of her and told her to do. Maria has now completed her GED and wants a college degree.

Emma is a 29 year old Anglo woman, who recently left everything behind, house, car, a good job and crossed state lines to escape a very abusive husband. A friend recommended the transitional housing programme and helped make arrangements for her to be accepted. Emma still lives in a great deal of fear that her husband will find her and her four year old son. He has threatened 'to kill' her. She says, 'I am doing whatever I can to stay hidden and safe. I am trying to live without fear, but I am scared'. Emma has received very little support from the justice and legal systems in protecting her from her husband, but she is motivated to build a new life for herself and her son. She sees herself as determined and strong. 'I am moving on. He swore he would take it all away. But he cannot take the fire inside of me'. She plans to attend college and pursue a career which will support herself and her child.

Although the role of self-reflection in facilitating change in a time of transition may seem obvious, society has not believed this in reference to families on government assistance who are trying to move out of cycles of poverty and violence (Dujon and Withorn 1996). Government funded programmes may offer important services to teach essential skills and provide opportunities for job training. Rarely, however, do the programmes offer the possibility and assistance for self-reflection and inner growth. Rarely can they provide the environment in which women can learn from one another and foster the empowerment of each other in the choices they must make. Maria and Emma are representative of the women in the study. They are single mothers with children seeking to break the cycles of poverty and violence in their lives and become independent and self-sustaining. They are currently living in transitional housing with programmes designed to assist them in that goal.

We, the initiators of the project are middle-class. We have neither known homelessness nor the experience of living in transitional housing; but we do share a piece of common ground with the collaborators in the study. As women, we know and are confronting the obstacles to empowerment and of becoming agents of change in our own lives. We know also, both the fear and the potential in times of transition. Recognition of this commonality compels us to listen to our own stories unfolding along with the stories of the women participating in the project and be willing, along with them, to discover and address the assumptions inherent in the conflicts of our lives. As educators, we approach the study from a similar place but with two different lens: one as a researcher and one as a practitioner. It seems essential to both of us that with our interest in transformative change, we find more ways to link relevant theories to daily life for millions of women who have little or no access to academia. It is essential that these theories are continuously informed by the life experience of the broadest possible diversity of women. One of the groups rarely tapped is women marginalised by socio-economic class, women who are poor (Bing and Reid 1996). Often the literature in the US speaks abstractly about class, while not actually addressing those who are other than middle class. 'As a culture we have class blindness, assuming middle class values and upward mobility as a general cultural aspiration' (Leeder 1996, 50). We intend to gather data in this study that gives voice to women not frequently published and offer relevant insights to the theory of transformative change.

Theoretical background

TLCPE rests on an interdisciplinary approach to learning and draws on theory and practice from psychology, spirituality, transformative learning, and social change. Human development theory (Coles 1964; Erikson 1964; Kegan 1982; Piaget 1968) identifies crisis as a potential time for growth, citing that in times of heightened vulnerability, a latent strength can often emerge. Carol Gilligan (1993) in her study of women's development demonstrates through women's stories how a time of crisis offers the opportunity to move from an old way of seeing things to a new one. She illuminates the developmental shift during which a woman's judgements change from the conventional mode of taking responsibility to feeling empowered and committed to choosing goals which are self-directed and life-giving.

Understanding the transformative growth process of adult women is enhanced by the insights and theoretical development of adult educators, such as John Dewey, Eduard Lindeman, Paulo Freire, and Jack Mezirow (Aronowitz and Giroux 1985; Freire 1982, Mezirow 1995). Two significant concepts that come from these leaders in the field are: the role of critical reflection on experience; and the recognition of the interrelationship between a person and her social context (Loughlin 1993). Literature in women's psychology indicates that an experience of change of consciousness or inner transformation for women is accompanied by a process of self-examination and self-reflection, either alone, with the guidance of a mentor or with a group of peers (Belenky *et al.* 1986; Gilligan 1993; Goldberger *et al.* 1996; Jordan *et al.* 1991; Kaschak 1992). This ability to be self-reflective allows one to look at life with new eyes.

Dean Elias (1997), in the work of transformative learning at the California Institute of Integral Studies, has identified three important conditions for a community which support and enhance transformative learning: a context that provides affective support and ensures equal access to information and processes of information exchange; each group member's personal capacity for self-awareness; and a flexibility within individuals and the group to learn from one another. We have built on all this theory in determining our intentions for the research.

Overview of the project

Our goals for the three year study are:

1) to collaborate with women transitioning from homelessness who want to become change agents in their lives;

2) to identify ways of facilitating learning and change through an educational intervention which is responsive to women in this social situation;

3) to research the process of personal change and empowerment, how change is experienced and what fosters or hinders it; and

4) to publish material from this study in written and video forms.

The project is framed within a feminist perspective that is characterised by collaboration and inclusivity, particularly the inclusivity of economically poor women (Collins 1990; Gottfried 1996). Our perspective also includes a deliberateness about using the situation at hand to bring to consciousness our experience as women, both as researchers and as participants in the study (Cook and Fonow 1990). This requires that the study include opportunities for all of us to grow personally as well as share information about lived experience. Using the Organic methodology (Clements, Ettling, Jenett and Shields, in press), the data gathered in this study is being analysed to document both the women's individual stories of empowerment as well as the elements that fostered and sustained change.

The 34 women involved in the study thus far are a mixed group. They range in age from 19 years to mid 50s, with the majority in the age range of 25-35 years. Approximately 1/3 of the group fall in each of the following racial/ethnic groupings: African-American, Hispanic-American and Anglo-American. There is one woman from South America, one from Mexico and one from India. All are mothers and the majority have young children. Whatever their diversity, all of these women currently share the common plight and struggle of homelessness.

The educational intervention

Each of the five learning communities ranges from 4 to 10 participants. These groups meet monthly for a minimum two-hour session. In the first phase of the project the basic skills of critical self-reflection on experience, the Learning to Learn process, is taught and facilitated in a series of ten group sessions over a ten month period.

The LTL process of reflection-action-reflection is based in the personal experiences of the participants. It is a method which facilitates and enables the women to identify underlying assumptions inherent in situations experienced as disempowering or empowering. Through the steps in the method, the women are led to see the roots of their assumptions as well as their ability to alter them. Thus they are taught a way to make or change the meaning of experiences in their lives.

This educational process bears resemblance to the action science approach within action research (Watkins and Shindell 1994). Like action science, LTL is intended to increase one's awareness of the inner contradictions inherent in everyday interactions and create conditions for change. This methodology, however, is designed for use in a popular education model outside of a structured academic or organisational setting.

One woman's experience

Jane is a thirty year old mother of two young boys, currently working at a fast food restaurant and participating in a transitional housing programme. She is over-weight and sometimes abrupt in her interactions with others. She joined the TLCPE project in September and in the initial group gatherings appeared uninvolved, yet continued to come to the sessions. At the beginning of the sixth session, she requested to present an experience because she needed to understand how to handle a confrontational situation with her parole officer whom she had avoided for three weeks. She had been referred to another agency by the parole officer because of her 'hostile' attitude. She feared another appointment because she might just 'go off and hit the officer'. She, with the group worked through the LTL process. Identifying assumptions about herself led her to the awareness that she felt 'like a nine year old child being shouted at' by her mother 'for not cleaning up' her room when she was with the parole officer. Staying with the process, assisted by the facilitators and others in the group, she came to the realisation that she could change her image of herself and claim her ability to act as an adult in the upcoming meeting with the officer. She worked through what that would mean for her and how it would look. Another member of the group role-played the interview with her. Group members pointed out both verbal and non-verbal changes in her behaviour as she assumed a different internal belief. She sat differently, spoke in a loud and clear voice and embodied a more assured demeanour. She worked and reworked how to state her feelings and thoughts from this space. At the close of that session, Jane recognised and claimed that she had empowered herself in the learning community.

In our session that evening, Jane gained insight about herself in a particular situation. By uncovering some assumptions that fuelled her feelings and reactions in that event, she was able to recognise the power those assumptions held for her in other situations also. Doubtless, Jane will need to work much more with changing her beliefs about herself. But she found a new freedom in the understanding and articulation of her learning about herself. The assistance and support she received from her peers was affirming. Each time the group works through one woman's experience, trust and confidence seems to grow. A month later, Jane reported to the group that she had in fact experienced herself very differently in her session with the parole officer and had begun to work with her on some new goals.

Researching the process of change: year one

Throughout this first year, we have met weekly with the three graduate students to design the methodology for the study and to reflect on and analyse the data. The data gathered thus far through the group discussions and the personal interviews identify twelve consistent factors that appear to be motivators of change for the women. These factors can be categorised into those which are primarily internal and those which are primarily external. Examples of primarily internal are: wanting to matter to oneself and wanting to matter in the world; feeling support and connection; experiencing one's own capabilities and creativity; and desire to be self-supporting. Examples of motivators which are primarily external are: their children's safety; learning from others; going to school; and having a relationship that matters.

The data also reveals factors that are seen as conflicts or obstacles which hinder empowerment or change. These too, could be viewed as primarily internal or external. Examples of internal blocks are: struggle between independence/dependence; guilt about setting boundaries and caring for oneself; trying to meet expectation of others; and difficulty in dealing with emotions, especially anger. Examples of obstacles which are primarily external are: breaking from family and cultural patterns; survival on minimum wage; double bind of working vs. child care; inability to have access to human/political rights because of socio-economics; and perceptions about people on welfare.

In studying this data, we have noted that a matrix seems to be formed, with support and obstacle drawn on a vertical line and internal and external on a horizontal line. The factors described seem to fall somewhere within this matrix. As we reflect on the work done in the group sessions as a result of the Learning to Learn process, we recall a similar pattern. When a woman realised that she could change her assumptions about herself or her social reality, she did in fact move one of these factors in her life to a different place on the matrix. As an example, when she challenged and changed her assumptions about herself as a woman on welfare, realising that the source of her conflict had as much, if not more, to do with the social systems' attitudes as with her own personal inadequacy, she was actually moving the factor around the matrix. We are currently attempting to validate some of our initial analysis by engaging the women in focus group discussions on the data. This will further illuminate our understanding of how change and empowerment occurs and shape the next step in our research.

We hope, with the women's collaboration, to be able to document more clearly the occurrence of a shift in perception which is enlightening and liberating. The shift has been obvious and visible in the group. It is that moment when a woman knows that she indeed can change her reality and chooses to engage in the critical reflection that can alter the meaning of an experience. This moment has been named by the women as empowering.

One increasing awareness in the facilitators during this past year is how much undealt with pain is present in these women's lives. Gently leading through the steps of the LTL process can be complicated by the desires of some group members to ease the discomfort and suggest premature solutions to conflictual situations. Although the process is no doubt therapeutic, it takes skill to avoid the sessions becoming group therapy for individual members while still creating an environment in which all of us benefits from the learning of each. Building a climate of respect, trust and confidentiality is inherently necessary for this process. The facilitators, themselves, have realised the need to experience and internalise LTL before they are able to facilitate it.

A second significant result of our first year's work has been the questions raised about the role and function of the facilitator in this transformative learning process. How does one create that climate that fosters change? How does this environment differ from therapy? And how does the role of the transformative learning facilitator differ from a group therapist? What kind of training is needed to facilitate such a process? We are committed to researching further these issues, gathering data from the experience of the participants as well as the facilitators' journaling and dialogue.

Our experience thus far in this project has been far richer than we could have anticipated. The collaboration within the research is compelling us to examine more deeply the effects of poverty and class discrimination. It is confirming our belief in the urgency for dialogue across the boundaries of race, class and culture in order to effect social transformation.

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Moving the borders while keeping the guard: introducing employability skills into British Columbia's schools and colleges

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Following well on the heels of competency-based educational reformation in the UK, Australia, New Zealand, the US and other provinces in Canada, the government of British Columbia initiated its own project of reformation several years ago. Like other competency-based reformation, this one too purports to better prepare students for the rigours of the highly-touted new global economy. A document entitled *Employability Skills Profile: The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Workforce* (see Appendix) provided a focus for this reformation in British Columbia (and Canada). Produced by the Corporate Council on Education of The Conference Board of Canada, the country's largest private think-tank, the Employability Skills Profile provides a ready-made tool to infuse 'generic skills' like teamwork skills, personal responsibility skills and academic skills (the three categories of 'skills' in the profile) into provincial curricula.

According to the Conference Board (funded by ALCAN, IBM, INCO, Northern Telecom, the banks, etc.) more than 7,000,000 of these so-called skills profiles were distributed in the two years following its publication in 1992 (Bloom 1994). In British Columbia the compulsory Career And Personal Planning curriculum for students in grades 8 through 12 is in part based on it, and it is becoming no less pervasive at the post-secondary level. The provincial Ministry of Education, Skills and Training will review new college and institute program proposals only if the ESP (employability skills profile) is included. The provincial Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development funds an ongoing development project aimed at retrofitting all provincial college and institute curriculum with the ESP; the (defunct) British Columbia Labour Force Development Board funded a project to translate the ESP into the competency-based educational language of levels and outcomes, 187 in all (*Employability Skills for British Columbia* 1996), and various colleges and institutes established internal committees to promote its adoption. A extensive website developed at Ministry expense is devoted to 'employability skills'. *Charting A New Course*, the strategic plan for BC's colleges, focuses on a competency-based, learning outcomes model that incorporates the ESP. In British Columbia, the Employability Skills Profile is comparable in influence to the SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, Department of Labor) report in the US. Some of this alacrity in adopting the ESP can be attributed to 'lag' as competency-based educational reformation came to BC (and Canada) quite late in the day. However, in typically Canadian fashion, this potential to learn from the experiences of others was squandered as provincial educational administrators compensated for the slow start with what could be considered an unaccustomed zeal. The ESP was accepted acritically and written into grade school curriculum at the provincial level and currently is being written into college and institute curriculum at the institutional level.

The Conference Board of Canada's Corporate Council is comprised of vice-presidents of the country's largest corporations. It is responsible for the ESP and uses the 'profile' to fulfil its mission to:

> act as a catalyst to engage business and education in partnerships that foster learning excellence and thus ensure that Canada is competitive and successful in the global economy... (and to) ensure that the goal of supporting and enhancing public education to meet our (Canada's) human resource needs for the next century is met (1992).

To all appearances, it is 'mission complete'. The Board's (Business) influence on the construction of education at the close of this century is comparable to the influence the Church still had at the end of the last. With wide distribution of the profile, supporting conferences and awards for 'excellence in education' granted by the Stentor Alliance (an alliance of Canadian telecommunications companies who are also major 'stakeholders' in The Conference Board), with labour unions, chambers of commerce and the federal and provincial governments promoting the ESP, the document found quick institutional acceptance. It was joined to PLA (prior learning assessment) and the outcomes-based model for curriculum development to form a reformational whole within BC's publicly funded post-secondary system. (Post-compulsory education is a thing of the past in BC as 'able' social assistance recipients are required to retrain. Lifeskills curriculum including 'employability skills' form much of the retraining curriculum). Currently all these reforms are being placed within a lifelong learning framework to provide the seamless learning system so desired by those running the business of education. As Stemmer, Brown, Smith (1992) comment regarding the Michigan Employability Skills Profile from which the Conference Board profile is largely derived, 'The basic premise of the profile is that learning is a lifelong process.'

These various reforms ensure 'skills training' will address and measure behavioural (personal management and teamwork skills) as well as conventional vocational and trades qualifications. To quote from the province's Employability Skills website:

> The research indicates that Canadians are not alone in wanting more effective development of employability skills. Employers from all over Europe report that they want their employees to have general transferable skills. They are less concerned with employees knowledge and expertise than their behaviour.

UK commentators suggest that the knowledge intensive economy and the increased number of service oriented jobs, combined with the problem of assuring quality and the increasing pressures on shorter product life cycles have created demand for greater flexibility at the production level and new kinds of qualifications or skills. The qualifications or skills identified include skills like multiskilling, customer oriented skills, initiative, creativity, responsibility, teamwork capabilities, worker flexibility, adaptability, and the ability and willingness to continuously improve competence. (http:www.est.gov.bc.ca/btp/data/empskils/into.htm #collecting 1996, 2)

This celebrational discourse of reformation seemingly provides a 'real-world', commonsensical, coherent and comprehensive response to the apparent crisis in education. It becomes obvious that the Corporate Council was not alone or first in conditioning the 'urgency' for educational reform via the introduction of generic competencies. As is evidenced above, similar discourses had been produced in other industrialised countries whose economic superiority had, like Canada's, been undermined by changes in the global organisation of capital, most specifically the UK and the US (Usher and Edwards 1994, 108). These discourses are virtually homogeneous, though the 'generic skills' developed in Australia seem more respectful of students than 'employability skills' in Canada do. These influences can be read, often quite explicitly, in the Employability Skills Profile and surrounding narratives such as the website itself. To quote from page 3 of the file referenced above:

- Different nations often use different terms to describe employability skills. For example:
- In some parts of Europe, skills and qualifications can have the same meaning.
- France calls employability skills 'crossing competencies' or 'transferable competencies.'
- The UK uses the terms 'core/common' skills and more recently has introduced the term 'key' skills.
- Italy's label is 'knowing how to be'.
- Germany refers to 'key qualifications.'
- Ireland identified a 'self-organizing attitude.'
- Denmark uses the term 'process/independent qualifications.'
- Australia uses 'key competencies.'
- The Netherlands refers to 'key', 'core,' or 'transversal' competencies.
- The US refers to 'necessary' skills, or 'skills needed for employment.'

Employability skills are also called generic skills, enabling skills and basic skills.

The political economy of *Employability Skills*

The quote above suggests that the normative presuppositions that ground 'employability skills' bespeak Market alone. A transnational hegemonic discourse of 'skills competencies' seemingly provides a (lowest) common educational denominator in the industrialised nations of the 'west', those nations recently gone soft and inconstant (as the narrative of the Right would have it) and become incapable of competing globally because their citizens have forgotten what the discipline of Market entails.

Fredric Jameson (Jameson 1995, 278) observed that the <Market> is both an idea and a thing, and that:

> the ideology of the market is unfortunately not some supplementary ideational or representational luxury... that can be removed from the economic problem...both dimensions must be registered together, in their identity as well as their difference.

Jameson goes further to suggest that surrender to various forms of market ideology has been 'imperceptible but alarmingly universal', and that this represents the most crucial terrain of ideological struggle in our time (Jameson 1995, 107). Market represents cynical Reason, the result of Enlightenment Reason taking on such broad connotations as to become effectively meaningless (Jameson 1995, 286). This endless play of 'differance' that Jameson identifies is visible in the ESP as what were formerly known as 'attitudes' become discursively constructed as 'skills', in 'critical thinking' being reduced to low level problem solving, and in 'academic' education being equated with numeracy and literacy (see Appendix). The much discussed 'dumbing-down' of the curriculum is evidenced in the ESP though this term of derision may miss the mark. This reform is more directed toward displacing "content" as the primary concern of the project of education, and replacing (not just supplementing) it with 'process' skills. Rather than 'dumbing-down' the curriculum this reform refocuses it, targeting the affective domain alongside or even over and above the cognitive domain or motor skills development. This is constructed as a 'progressive' reform inside the institutions as it answers calls by the corporate sector for education to be concerned with students' 'behaviour' over and above their 'knowledge' and 'expertise' (see above).

This reform is being accomplished in British Columbia's colleges and institutes through 'progressive' educators who set directions in the institutions being captured by a Canadian variant of the New Right 'discourse of derision' (Usher and Edwards 1994) which provides the justification for these radical reforms. To quote from Camille Natale's article *Eduspeak*:

> This is the group (the Conference Board) remember that spent millions of dollars lobbying (i.e. knowingly telling lies to) every level of government, and orchestrating the crescendo of dissatisfaction with the public school system. The tremendous success of their efforts is evidenced everywhere. (Natale 1996, 44)

Though the 'official' (and grammatically homespun) narrative published by the Conference Board (1992), claims the 'profile' was developed because 'educators urged (its) Corporate Council (on Education) to provide Canadians with information about the skills employers are looking for.', the chronology of events in BC suggests the opposite. It appears that the Council may have assessed and articulated business needs in terms of skills, attitudes, behaviours and knowledge (not too much), and developed strategies to ensure the integration of the targeted attributes through educational reform before educators, at least those from BC, approached it for assistance.

The ESP, it is evident, reduces relevant education to Market support. When this project of educational 'underdevelopment' (see below) is combined with the accompanying economic narrative of scarcity, which 'beggared' the Canadian state and enriched the private sector, a 'politics of everyday fear' provides, if not the main text, then certainly a sub-text for the ESP. In a book of the same name, Brian Massumi states:

> According to Antonio Negri (1988), the 1970s and 1980s saw a radical reorganisation of capitalism.
>
> The self-proclaimed 'humanism' of the integrative strategy of the Keynesian era was abandoned for often ruthless strategies of displacement, fluidification, and intensification that once again averted both social revolution and self-generated collapse (Massumi 1993, 14).

The 'profile' goes to work: constructing subjectivity *on demand* and *just-in-time*

The ESP recognises these strategies of displacement, fluidification and intensification by valorising 'personal responsibility skills' so workers accept the intensification of labour, by valorising new 'skills sets' that are supposedly 'generic' and therefore supposedly transferable from temporary job to temporary job, and by 'downloading' the responsibility for 'job loss' and 'unemployment' onto the (former) workers themselves. In this role the ESP, disciplines the working class and its potential recruits (Paterson 1994) in ways similar to those imposed when the project of compulsory, publicly-funded education was first instituted in Canada (Curtis 1988).

Donald Lowe explains:

> we have in late capitalism the valorisation of social reproduction, gender, and sexuality, and even psychic make-up. In other words, the regime of accumulation in late capitalism can no longer rely on a relatively stable, relatively autonomous mode of regulation, but needs to understand how to underdevelop and thus destabilise it. (Lowe 1995, 88)

In British Columbia (and Canada) the introduction of the Employability Skills Profile by the Conference Board has been central to this project of underdevelopment and destabilisation. The project of education, which was until recently a relatively stable and autonomous mode of regulation residing in part in Bourdieu's *habitus* or Habermas' *lifeworld*, has been colonised by Market. This seems to be the 'real' thrust of the ESP, embedded as it is in the discursive privileging of a new breed of flexible workers with bleak employment prospects no matter the degree to which they 'learn to be' in congruence with the requirements of the post-industrial economy.

Our much touted knowledge-based economy which supposedly requires an increasing number of knowledge-workers is actually a sign of the post-modern equation wherein consumption of consumption equals production. This knowledge-based economy does not require large numbers of knowledgeable production workers. In fact, just the opposite is the case. The 'big box' discount store Wal Mart is now the largest private sector employer in the USA. AT&T, like Bell and the other telecommunications companies in Canada, which were to be progenitors of employment in the hi-tech information age, have laid off thousands of workers in the past few years. The new economy does not resemble the recruitment posters (the propaganda) that preceded it. It does, however, require vast numbers of knowledgeable consumers who possess voracious desires and some money to pay for the constant change embedded in the commodity form, including lifelong learning. A necessary corollary is the acquisition of sufficient ability and knowledge by the consumer 'just in time' to configure and use these new commodities. The New World Order of flexible accumulation requires a high performance subject, who can work, learn, consume and produce *on demand* and *just-in-time:* the Flexisubject.

In order to accomplish this subjective reconstruction, the ESP as a piece of competency-based curriculum dedicated to addressing lack in terms of students' knowledge, skills and attitudes, places individual attributes previously held to be outside the purvey of state education within the formal boundaries of institutional control. Though the modern state (Curtis 1988) has always been interested in ensuring education fosters the attitudes required for individuals to function effectively in the workplace, the ESP extends the range of contemporary state control in the affective arena, requesting, for example, that students take-on or slough-off affective attributes (particular attitudes) in congruence with the changing landscape of post-industrial production. In purely instrumental (performative, Lyotard 1984) terms this intervention in subjective development provides a two-fold operation: it 'trains' the body to be an instrument for successful work performance; and, it produces in the individual a desire for mastery of occupational performance (Usher and Edwards 1994, 106). In ideological terms, the effect is perhaps as profound. The discourse of Market which grounds this 'subjective' training and surveillance cannot but be naturalised with the student simultaneously subjected to attitudinal education and the specific (highly interested) version of reality that grounds it.

The Conference Board's profile, which enacts 'real' desire through its promise of 'success' in the global market, operates between and over contradictory social relations. The ESP inscribes subjectivities within a normalising discourse of global competition which elides inequity and difference. As such it provides a re-disciplining of the remains of the working class through proffering signifiers that powerfully suggest 'freedom' can obtained through incorporating the dictates of Market. Training, discipline and competition promise to bridge contradictory subject positions characterised by fear and lack, and carry the subject to a new position of empowerment and self-sufficiency. It defines the 'critical' components of this bridge to a new subjectivity by establishing supposedly definitive competencies which will lead the new subject to the promised land of 'personal fulfilment' (Bloom 1994). By idealising and romanticising the 'archaic' autonomous subject of modernity, the ESP promises personal liberty, security and identity just at the juncture when the changed relations of production (post-industrialism) have undermined the historical basis for traditional liberal humanism. This new, 'progressive' discourse of competency based education has brilliantly appropriated the language of liberal humanism anchored in the meta-narrative of modernity (emancipation, progress), and in the process inverted the liberal academy.

In a complex and often paradoxical fashion the discourse of employability skills also deploys nationalism by employing a post-modern, semiotic shell game. At one moment, nationhood is attended by the negative notions of risk, crisis and fear, while at others it is attended by positive notions of individual responsibility, success and security. This slippage in signification is obtained by anchoring the signifier 'nation' with two very different signifieds. The first is a traditional Fordist, industrialised version of nation which, in its fiscal and regulatory 'crisis,' places citizens at risk of deprivation and even starvation in the face of global competition. The second is a new, post-Fordist, post-industrial nation which provides for personal and national success and security through fiscal responsibility, national teamwork and international competition in the global market. Through this rhetorical device of displacement, the latter version of nationhood usurps and deploys signifiers historically associated with the former to achieve its privilege.

This new 'national'ism, which occludes 'nation' in the modern sense gains vitality through hearkening back to the old nationalism, drawing upon signifiers like individualism, freedom and democracy with libidinal force. Once this new form of 'national'ism has been re-written with the traditional nation-state removed, it is itself re-inscribed within globalisation, metamorphosing into a new 'nationalism' that, in its inversion, exists as a powerful representative of the global Market. By this means, the ESP legitimises transnational as well as national capital as operating in the 'national' interest and in the interests of the citizenry in general. These 'inverted' signifiers interpellate the discourse of subject formation (education) with a vitality that suggests the 'copy' is as powerful as the 'original', even if that 'original' only existed in the country's 'cultural imaginary'.

Moving the borders while keeping the guard

Since the Reagan administration published *A Nation at Risk* (1981) and the Thatcher government implemented sweeping changes to the UK educational system through the National Council for Vocational Qualification (1977), working people in Western industrialised democracies have been inundated with the message that their way of life, their prosperity and, most importantly, their security is threatened because of their own inadequacy. The post-Fordist state, business lobby groups such as the Conference Board of Canada, and educators themselves have implemented awareness and intervention programs to deal with a supposed human capital crisis (Hart 1992, 70). The ESP, as one of these intervening discourses, exemplifies that breaking boundaries and crossing borders can revise and re-impose disciplinary discursive regimes rather than challenging the regime or rendering it transparent.

Transgressive discourses whether 'left' or 'right' cannot but invoke resistance. The ESP is no different; yet resistance has for the most part been muted and diffuse. Institutional resistance 'on the ground' manifests itself in comments such as 'we already teach that', 'its not our job to do business training', 'there is no time for me teach this and my course content', 'music (or art) are more important'. Published resistance literature in Canada is limited to a half dozen journal articles and a few books, the most prominent of which is Maude Barlow's and Heather Jane Robertson's *Class Warfare* (1994). Competency-based education, PLA, learning outcomes, generic skills training and lifelong learning have been subject to very little critical scrutiny in Canada. Much of the scrutiny they have received, ironically, has originated with the Christian Right in the US. Though that 'agenda-driven' group has goals for education that may be more transgressive than contemporary secular reform, nonetheless that group, unlike many 'progressive' educators, acknowledges some of the profound implications of these reforms. Breaking boundaries and crossing borders seems an exercise fraught with irony, support located where resistance might be expected and resistance located in places often assumed to harbour unqualified support.

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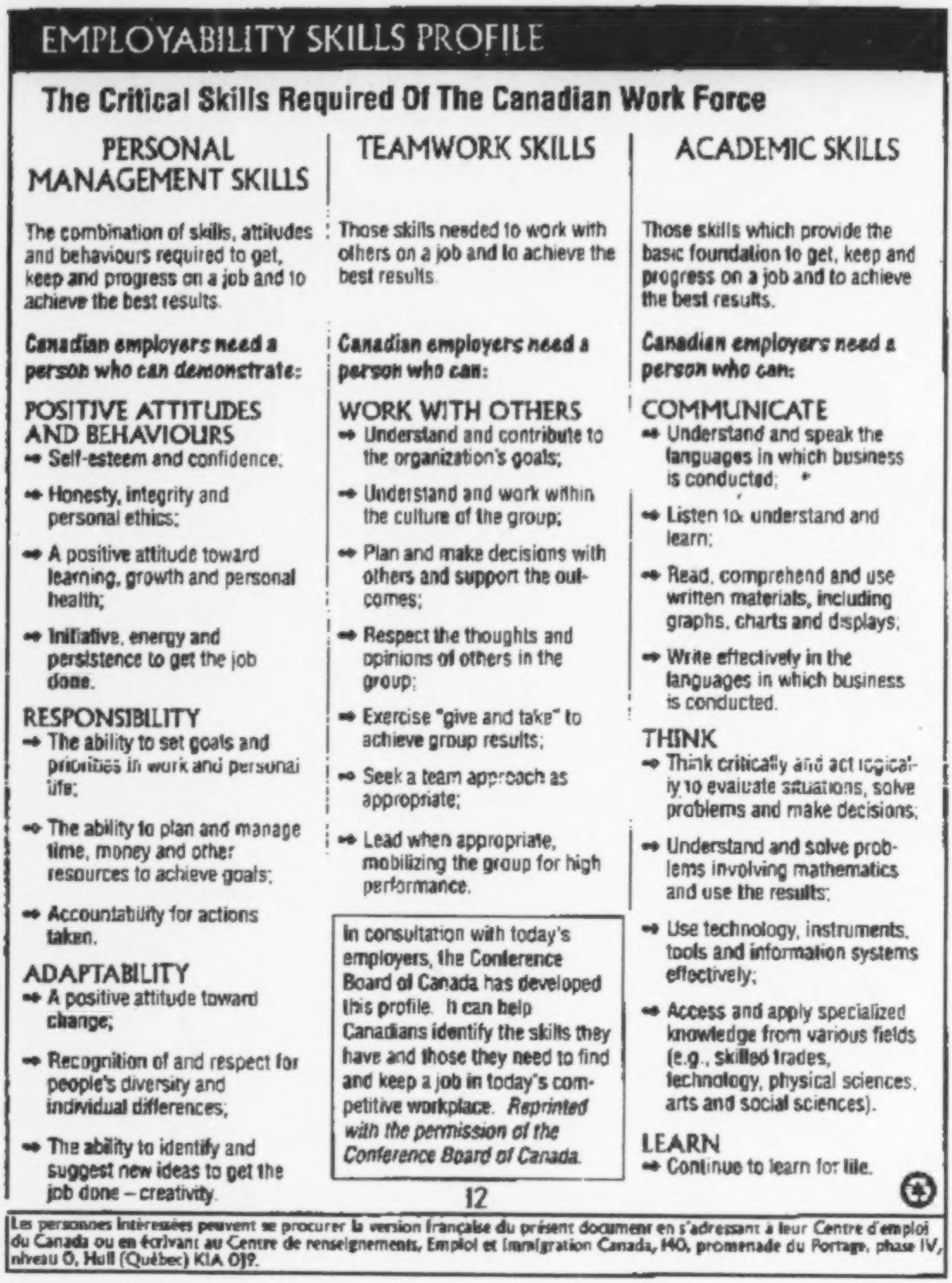
Appendix



EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS PROFILE

The Critical Skills Required Of The Canadian Work Force

PERSONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS

The combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours required to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results.

Canadian employers need a person who can demonstrate:

POSITIVE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS

- ➡ Self-esteem and confidence;
- ➡ Honesty, integrity and personal ethics;
- ➡ A positive attitude toward learning, growth and personal health;
- ➡ Initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done.

RESPONSIBILITY

- ➡ The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life;
- ➡ The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals;
- ➡ Accountability for actions taken.

ADAPTABILITY

- ➡ A positive attitude toward change;
- ➡ Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences;
- ➡ The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done – creativity.

TEAMWORK SKILLS

Those skills needed to work with others on a job and to achieve the best results.

Canadian employers need a person who can:

WORK WITH OTHERS

- ➡ Understand and contribute to the organization's goals;
- ➡ Understand and work within the culture of the group;
- ➡ Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes;
- ➡ Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group;
- ➡ Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results;
- ➡ Seek a team approach as appropriate;
- ➡ Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance.

In consultation with today's employers, the Conference Board of Canada has developed this profile. It can help Canadians identify the skills they have and those they need to find and keep a job in today's competitive workplace. *Reprinted with the permission of the Conference Board of Canada.*

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Those skills which provide the basic foundation to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results.

Canadian employers need a person who can:

COMMUNICATE

- ➡ Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted;
- ➡ Listen to understand and learn;
- ➡ Read, comprehend and use written materials, including graphs, charts and displays;
- ➡ Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted.

THINK

- ➡ Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions;
- ➡ Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results;
- ➡ Use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively;
- ➡ Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences).

LEARN

- ➡ Continue to learn for life.

12

Les personnes intéressées peuvent se procurer la version française du présent document en s'adressant à leur Centre d'emploi du Canada ou en écrivant au Centre de renseignements, Emploi et Immigration Canada, 140, promenade du Portage, phase IV, niveau O, Hull (Québec) K1A 0J9.

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Desiring a discipline: negotiating the postmodern divide

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> It almost looks as if analysis were the third of those 'impossible' professions in which one can be sure beforehand of achieving unsatisfying results. The other two, which have been known much longer, are education and government.
> Sigmund Freud[1]

This paper provides a reflection upon my current postgraduate research, research broadly interested in the boundary which exists between the institution of education and the working class. In addition, and in order to avoid the now sclerotic antinomy of this issue, this interest is being pursued through a transgression of the usual boundaries of educational discourse: rather than adopting a political, historical, sociological or psychological perspective, my research focuses upon the subjective representation and narration of the disturbance effected by education upon the category of class. Thus my source material has predominantly been taken from examples of working-class autobiography and autobiographical fiction. I am also trying to apply postmodern theories of the subject in an attempt to deconstruct the persistent binary of education and class. However, of greater relevance here is that my research, because of its methodology, is frequently forced to confront and attempt to negotiate other issues of boundary.

During its very early stages my research was motivated by the desire to consider the fate of an education discourse wedded to the emancipatory logic of social purpose adult education (that is, social purpose as defined by left wing politics) in an increasingly hostile atmosphere. It soon became apparent that both objects of my analysis, 'social purpose adult education' and the 'working class' were becoming increasingly difficult to define in familiar terms. The profile of social purpose adult education had been hit by the effects of policy directives flowing from a succession of Conservative governments; similarly the field has felt, negatively, the impact of the now pervasive discourse of postmodernism, which abandons the language of emancipation and appears to offer little else as compensation. As for the working class, they have dissolved into a sea of difference and the radicalism of class politics has been superseded by a newer radical alternative, the politics of difference.

It was out of such difficulties that my present approach emerged. I decided to make interesting, rather than inevitable, the present position in which, as suggested above, within the categories of contemporary theory social class stands almost at the point of dismissal whilst other forms of difference attract considerable attention. Such a choice involved a more positive engagement with the current intellectual terrain and with this a necessary negotiation of the rather antagonistic relationship between the discourse of postmodernism and the political ideology behind 'social purpose education'. Similarly I have tried to bring a greater theoretical elaboration to the discourse of education, where it is acknowledged that the lack of such elaboration presents a problem (Bahove, 1993:165).

Such trespasses aside though, I am finding my present approach, although challenging, productive. For example, taken more positively the postmodern perspective can create a space in which the complex meanings of both class and education can be explored. Furthermore, it provides a theoretical interlude during which the failure of previous interpretative frameworks may be assessed. More pertinently here, postmodern theories reveal what perhaps was always there: the instability of the boundaries containing both the meaning of class and education. The remainder of this paper will consider how my approach has affected the concept of class as this is inflected by gender and the impact of postmodern theories of knowledge upon the category of education.

Gendering class or classy gender

Carolyn Steedman's recent version of working-class autobiography, *Landscape for a Good Woman* (1986), her connection to pre- and post-war British working-class life, her pointed emphasis on gender and unusual foregrounding of shame, fantasy and desire in the imbricated stories of her own and her mother's lives, are of particular relevance to my study. Steedman's text is exemplary: its articulation of those forces which organise, administer and produce the working-class subject is facilitated by her overall aim which is to disturb 'those theories that have been used in [her] discipline, and that have pre-determined the status and voice of the 'subject' who is not viewed as an individual' (Kadar, 1992:81). Steedman's dissatisfaction with those pre-determined and pre-determining theories has implications for both the discourse of class and class consciousness, and that concerned with the construction of knowledge. In the following examples I will try to illustrate the ways in which class and class-consciousness has been discussed and presented, and the inadequacies of such theories, dependent as they are upon privileging certain aspects of identity over others.

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[1] Sigmund Freud, The standard edition of the complete psychological works, vol. 23. ed James Strachey, London, 1953-66 (248)

There are two broad theories through which the construction of working-class consciousness is usually represented: those of resistance/refusal and of reproduction. At the forefront of resistance theory is the Birmingham-based Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). Acknowledging the faltering of the purely political imperative, the CCCS work to uncover and celebrate those counter-hegemonic practices within working-class culture which resist the influence of dominant culture. Thus, they have produced studies of industrial shop-floor practices, television spectatorship and female students' classroom behaviour[2]. Such an approach allows the maintenance of the concept of working-class agency albeit in altered form. The problem with this model, however, is that it is dependent upon an agent who although combative with, is yet impervious to, the dominant culture. Thus, such accounts cannot represent those complex desires which seek consolation within the dominant order. Similarly those theories which seek to describe the breakdown of working-class consciousness in terms of reproduction present a model of painless assimilation which overlooks the more subtle senses of 'injury', particularly as they are experienced by women. The following reference attempts to illustrate the type of approach I am suggesting here.

James Cronin's study *Labour and Society in Britain 1918-1979* (1984), begins with the issue of 'decay' or 'disintegration' within the contemporary British working class and goes on to develop a broadly Foucauldian analytical model in order to understand the perceived change in post-World War II working-class consciousness. Interestingly he points to women as the force which moved the working class from 'the active sphere of production to that of passive consumption' (Cronin 1984, 69). Although Cronin's study is useful, in its focus upon an aspect of working-class experience which has been consistently devalued in part through its feminisation, the following remark is revealing: 'It is fair to say that class consciousness, as we understand the term, is primarily a masculine conception' (Cronin 1984, 153). Cronin's preservation here, of a privileged term, the idea of a legitimate working-class consciousness, which is also masculine, is limiting.

The above references attempt, inadequately, to illustrate the terms of the debate over the nature and development of working-class consciousness and agency, over the post-World War II era; older, monolithic models are often set against newer, more culturally-orientated varieties. Additionally, that historicism which tends to conceive of the pre-war working class as a homogenous, public, organised unit of opposition has been challenged by a feminist-directed cultural criticism which emphasises heterogeneity within the culture and focuses on women's distinct forms of class rebellion[3] What this latter work illustrates, of course, is that gender is a crucial factor and not something to be merely 'added on'.

From the context of my research, what is unhelpful about each of the above models is their dependence upon a theory of agency or the subject in which either one aspect or another of identity must be privileged at the expense of the relegation of other aspects. It is the desire to acknowledge and represent various composite aspects of identity which attracts me to some of the strategies of postmodernism. Postmodern theories of the subject rely, of course, not upon the idea of a centred, unified self, but upon the concept of fractured, multiple identities. Within my research, in attempting to adjudicate between, on the one hand, the demands of gender, and on the other, those of class affiliation, I find the fluidity and expansiveness of a post modern approach enabling. Moreover it is an approach whose usefulness for me is amplified when considering the issue of social class and education.

Education and the postmodern critique

From the perspective of education perhaps one of the more disturbing features of postmodernist thought is what has been termed 'the crisis of legitimation'. However, within the field of adult education, debates over what counts as legitimate knowledge are not new. Sallie Westwood has neatly summarised them:

> The first of these was the role of the state and the relationship between the state, 'schooling' and emancipatory education. The second was the issue of gender which was allied with the debate between feminism and socialism. The third was the issue of 'Really Useful Knowledge' which in the 20th-century became a debate about the role of Marxism in independent working-class education; and the fourth, exemplified in the debate between the Plebs League and the WEA, was the complex relationship between the political projects of socialism and radical adult education. (Westwood 1992, 22).

Nearer in time, the work of Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams has questioned the boundaries of education, asking how certain narratives and categories are instituted as authoritative.

Both Hoggart and Williams had been working-class 'scholarship boys'; both were involved in adult education and both came from a base in literary criticism. Hoggart founded the CCCS at Birmingham University in 1964 whereas Williams, after fourteen years in adult education, returned to the academic heartlands taking up a post at Cambridge. Both of these men used their marginal positions to disturb the boundaries of their discipline with lasting influence though to different effects. Hoggart's departure from orthodoxy lay in his application of the close textual analysis of English studies to unfamiliar texts, those concerned with a 'lived' working-class culture. In Williams's work the literary text was not radically displaced but contextualised and historicised: works of literature were not to be treated as repositories of transient values preserved by an educated élite, but shown to be the product of the relations of society at large. From my perspective, pursuing my interests in working-class autobiography has no doubt been facilitated and legitimated by the innovations secured by theorists such as Hoggart and Williams.

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[2] For a useful overview of the CCCS's work see Hall (1980) Women's Studies Group (1978), Willis (1977), Fiske (1987)

[3] See for example, Ross (1982, 1993) and Roberts (1984)

A focus on popular forms of writing opens up the social institution of literature, revealing how it comes to organise the field of writing and also why the category of popular writing is both a necessity and a problem. It is necessary because it marks the boundary between what is and what is not literature. In this sense the popular forms a constitutive role. At the same time it is a problem since these excluded forms of writing reveal the splits and fragmentations within the transcendent and universalising aspirations expressed by literature; fissures which the contextual, historical approach developed by Williams can exploit. Arguably, however, radical and disturbing as such work was and is upon the field of English studies, it is of a different order to the potentially profound implications of some aspects of postmodern thought upon the status of knowledge and, by extension, the meaning of education.

In 1977 the President of the Conseil des Université of the Government of Quebec asked one of France's leading philosophers, Jean-François Lyotard, to construct a report on the current state of knowledge in the advanced societies. Lyotard's response was the now seminal text *The Postmodern Condition* (1979). Here Lyotard presents the thesis that the meaning of postmodernity is inextricably related to the changing conditions of knowledge and technology which are producing forms of social organisation that are undermining the traditional social practices of modernity. This had of course been noted by Marx over the more disruptive aspects of modernity. The difference with postmodernity, Lyotard suggested, was that it offered no compensatory narrative, such as that of progress. Rather, it privileges diversity and contingency against the totalising narratives of the previous age. The postmodern world is one without stability, where knowledge is constantly changing and where meaning can no longer be anchored in a teleological view of human development. The implications for the discourse of education of such an orientation are, perhaps, obvious. It becomes difficult to secure the function and meaning of education since it is impossible to define exactly what kind of transaction education performs. If Williams and Hoggart found the boundaries of their discipline constricting, unrepresentative, the postmodernist, in turn, may find their expansion still tight.

In an interesting contribution to this issue James Donald finds a surprising similarity between the educational theory of Kenneth Baker (former Conservative Secretary of State for Education and Science in the UK) and that of Raymond Williams. Referring to Kenneth Baker's role in piloting the Education Reform Act 1988, responsible, amongst other things, for instituting the national curriculum, Donald finds similarities between Baker's underlying notion of 'Englishness' and Williams's concept of a common culture outlined in his text *The Long Revolution* (1961):

> Not surprisingly, Williams's conception was more humane and democratic than Mr Baker's could ever be but there is a real question whether it could provide the basis for a convincing alternative . Its ideal of a common culture also proves to be more common to some people than to others. It embodies a particular tradition and ideal of British radicalism: a very different notion from Mr Baker's Englishness, certainly, but still one held together by a normative community defined by its own boundaries of representation. Its claim to consensus inescapably also defines those who are excluded. (Donald 1992, 130)

Donald's remarks echo a now familiar complaint concerning the inherent limitations of Williams's approach to culture, a notice familiar to feminists, for example, conscious of his gender blindness. Although familiar it is a quite legitimate observation. The kind of radicalism exemplified here by Raymond Williams remains, again to quote James Donald, embedded within 'the same political logic of experience, identity and affiliation as the Conservatism they reject' (Donald 1992, 131). Such oppositions arguably operate on the basis of an 'if only' approach and seem unaware of the paradox of individual freedom being achieved only through the individual's submission to pedagogic norms. Since it thrives on paradox this is, of course, the paradox to which postmodernism is drawn, Freud's 'impossibility', if you like. The question is, of course, whether the postmodern's limited, if functional, view of the powers of the educational process are useful: its very lack of foundation may make it an approach which is impracticable and therefore more ineffective.

Within my work I find postmodern ideas useful in that they enable a reformation of the rather entrenched debate over the issue of education and social class. Reading narratives written by people who to varying degrees have undertaken some kind of formal education I am struck, though not surprised, by the repetition of the perceived and alienating opposition of the educational process and the working-class subject. Postmodern theories of the subject and of the meaning of knowledge and education are useful in deconstructing this persistent boundary since they do not depend upon ordering into some kind of hierarchy an individual's different identities. Thus gender, for example, is not necessarily more primary than class identification or *vice versa*, but may exist in a kind of coalition which is constantly being negotiated and re-negotiated. Similarly educational experience does not merely overlap, or react with, cultural background, but can fuse and realign. Postmodernist ideas, potentially, offer me strategies and space, in which to recast or try to recast familiar oppositions and conflicts.

In practice, of course, trying to use such strategies, to concretise them in language, is another matter. It may be argued that disciplines and boundaries are constructed and thus artificial, a defensive response to what is otherwise chaos, masking lines of affiliation and interdependence, however, they are established and trying to operate without them can be uncomfortable. Thus, perhaps, the 'desire' of my title is somewhat ambiguous: it refers to the wish to theorise the construction of categories and the relationship between such construction and the construction of knowledge in a more fluid way; it also registers the need for certainty and fixity and the desirability, often, of the containment of disciplines.

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Postgraduate education and adult education: growing together?

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As work towards a higher degree I have been examining changes in postgraduate education in Australia, in the context of changes overseas and throughout the long history of the university. The focus of this work has been on the scope and dimensions of change and what this means for the roles and functions of postgraduate education in the university, and in the broader community. This work has encompassed some consideration of the intersections and links between postgraduate education and other forms and levels of post-compulsory education: principally, but not exclusively, undergraduate education.

This paper is a first attempt to consider the changes in postgraduate education in relation to adult education. Its purpose is not to reach any conclusions but to scan the evidence that might elucidate if and how these two forms of education intersect and whether their relationship is influenced by the changes that have and are occurring.

Postgraduate education

In Australia postgraduate education is generally defined by its entry requirements. That is, it is defined as comprising courses of study that require a first degree, or equivalent, for entry. Within this broad definition there are courses at four different levels: Sub-masters; Masters, Doctorate and Higher Doctorate, although the latter is often excluded from discussions of postgraduate issues, due to the very small number that are awarded each year, and the manner in which they are awarded.

At each course level there are different types of courses. At the doctoral level the PhD is awarded as institution-wide degree, but in recent years several disciplines (for example, Education and Engineering) have developed courses leading to the award of a professional doctorate in that discipline. There are two types of masters courses — by research and by coursework, but some recent research by McInnis, James and Morris (1995) has suggested that there are three different types of coursework masters alone: traditional academic; professional specialisation; and new fields professional courses. At the sub-masters level there are course types; short certificate courses; masters preliminary and qualifying programmes; graduate bachelors degrees; and courses leading to a graduate or post-graduate diploma.

Course level	Course Type
Higher Doctorate	Higher Doctorate
Doctorate	Ph.D. Professional Doctorates in disciplines
Masters	Masters by research Masters by coursework
Sub-masters	Graduate or postgraduate diplomas and certificates Masters qualifying and preliminary programmes Graduate bachelor's degrees

Adult education

Defined broadly, adult education clearly encompasses postgraduate education. A recent book on adult education and training in Australia (Foley, 1995) identified that the field of adult education has expanded and diversified beyond an earlier emphasis on non-award courses. The authors adopted a broad view in which four forms of adult education and learning are recognised: formal education; non-formal education; informal learning; and incidental learning[1]. Postgraduate education is included in the first of these four categories, for, as described, the characteristics of formal learning are all also applicable to postgraduate education: it is organised by professional educators; has a defined curriculum; often leads to a qualification; and occurs in educational institutions including universities.

Defined narrowly, however, adult education is more likely to exclude postgraduate education. In 1986 the NSW Ministry of Education wrote of adult learning as

> education for adults other than initial preparation for a career, with primary emphasis on non-award education. (Foley 1995)

Similarly, in Victoria, adult education has been described as

> the education of persons who are beyond the age of compulsory school attendance, with special characteristics when it takes place outside of award courses (Edgar 1988, quoted in ACFEB undated, 21).

While neither of these examples directly excludes postgraduate education, their focus on non-award education pushes it to the margins of adult education.

Examined more closely, the difference between these broad and narrower views of adult education appears to be related to the difference between theory and practice: between the way in which adult education is conceptualised, and the way in which it is socially organised. From a theoretical perspective, postgraduate education *is* adult education, because those who participate in it are, in general, adults. In practice though, adult education and postgraduate education are organised in different ways, and provided and delivered in different settings. A history of adult education in Victoria illustrates this when it states that:

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[1] This typology has limitations, and the boundaries between the categories are blurred. Nevertheless, it is useful in that it goes 'beyond limited and limiting understandings of the scope of adult education and learning and emphasises 'the importance of informal and incidental learning' (Foley 1995 p xv)._

> Adult, community and further education is one of three broad areas of educational provision for adults in Victoria. The other two are vocational education and training and higher education, (ACFEB, undated, 21)[2].

Depending on whether a theoretical or an organisational perspective of adult education is adopted, changes in postgraduate education will be viewed as having a different sort of impact on adult education. If a theoretical perspective is adopted, in which postgraduate education is considered a sub-section of adult education, then the impact will be more direct. If an organisational perspective is adopted, in which postgraduate education is a part of a higher education sector that is separate from an adult education sector, then the impact will be more indirect — through the links between the two sectors.

Both perspectives are important in building a realistic picture. Each adds a further dimension, or more colour and shade. Thus in considering recent changes in postgraduate education and their impact on adult education in this paper I will attempt to consider both perspectives in turn.

Changes in postgraduate education

Not so long ago a postgraduate student at an Australian university was likely to be typified as young, male, enrolled full-time in a research higher degree in Science or Engineering, studying with the intention of entering a career as an academic, or a researcher for government or industry. Today, this picture describes a declining minority of the postgraduate student population.

The postgraduate student population is now much more diverse than it was only two decades ago, so that a 'typical' postgraduate student probably no longer exists, if it ever did. Nevertheless, if we were to try to describe a typical postgraduate student of the 1990s, we would probably picture someone very different from the young male full-time Science career aspirant mentioned above. Instead, we would picture a mature-age student, either male or female, already established in paid employment, enrolled part-time in a coursework-based programme at masters level or below in (depending on gender) Business, Health or Education. He or she could be studying for a variety of employment-related reasons, or for personal development or interest.

Snapshot: postgraduate education in 1975[3]

In the mid 1970s, there were fewer than 30,000 students enrolled in postgraduate courses in higher education institutions in Australia. The majority (60%) were enrolled at higher degree (that is, Masters, or Doctorate) level and mostly in research-based, rather than coursework-based programmes

At higher degree level, seven of the eleven fields of study had more research than coursework students. The two fields of study with the largest number of higher degree students were Natural Sciences and Arts, both had substantial majorities of research students. (Arts 78%, Science 89%).

In universities, at all course levels and in all types of courses, the majority of postgraduate students in universities were male. Women were less than a quarter of all PhD students, a third of Masters and preliminary/qualifying students, and half (47%) of postgraduate diploma students. However, in colleges of advanced education, women outnumbered men in postgraduate diploma courses.

Fewer than half (41%) of the 5352 commencing students enrolled full-time, but there were differences according to course level and type. Most Ph.D. and postgraduate diploma students were full-time (62% and 72% respectively) but only 28% of Masters Research and 16% of Masters Coursework students. Part-time and coursework students tended to be older than full-time students. The median age for full-time enrolled students was 27, for part-time students was 33.

A 1976 survey of higher degree students (CDE 1982) found that the factor most influential in motivating students to participate in postgraduate courses was 'personal fulfilment in the acquisition of knowledge and competence'. Only a quarter (26%) indicated employment-related motivations. This low figure was attributed to 'publicity in recent years on the difficulties experienced by highly qualified persons entering the labour force in finding work in which they can make full use of their qualifications' (CDE, 1982, 35).

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[2] In the late twentieth century the boundaries between these three 'broad areas' of educational provision are becoming blurred. Higher education is still distinguishable from the other two broad areas, or sectors, by its restriction to defined higher education institutions, yet, many of these courses are vocational in purpose; and higher education institutions also offer some non-award courses for adults. In recent years, the vocational education and training sector, re-organised under the Australian National Training Authority, has been redefined to encompass a broader range of educational providers including providers whose primary function is the provision of adult education. Thus, adult and community education has been, to some extent subsumed within the vocational education and training sector, although it still offers courses and programmes that are classified as recreational rather than vocational.

[3] This section draws heavily on Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1975), University Statistics 1975, Part 1 Students, Ref No 13.7 and ABS (1975a) Colleges of Advanced Education Statistics 1975, Ref 13.10

Snapshot: postgraduate education 1994[4]

In 1994, there were about 120,00 students undertaking a postgraduate course in a higher education institution in Australia; that is, about four times the number in 1975. The majority were enrolled for a higher degree, but the proportion of students in other postgraduate programmes was larger than in 1975 and in contrast to 1975, most higher degree students (64%) were enrolled in coursework, rather than research-based programmes. Overall, considering all postgraduate courses, coursework students outnumbered research students in a majority (seven) of the 10 fields of study and in the three fields of study with the greatest number of students.

At the doctoral level, the fields of study with the most students were the same as for 1975, but there were some differences at masters level. Business Administration and Economics had become the field with the highest number of higher degree students, followed by Arts and Education. Science, the third largest field in 1975, was no longer part of this grouping. Only a small minority (15%) of students in the largest field were enrolled in research-based courses.

In contrast to 1975, half of all enrolled postgraduate students were women. Although they remained the minority in masters and doctoral level courses, women were 58% of all postgraduate diploma enrolments and 78% of enrolments in qualifying/ preliminary courses.

Overall, a smaller percentage of students were enrolled full-time in 1994 than in the mid 1970s. While the proportion of PhD and Masters students preferring full-time enrolment had changed little, a dramatic decline in the proportion of students preferring full-time enrolment at the diploma level, from 72% to 20% accounted for the difference. A probable explanation was a decline in the proportion of students at this level undertaking courses in Education, where full-time enrolment at the diploma level is common, and an increase in enrolments in Business and Health, where part-time enrolment is more frequent.

In 1994, more than half of all postgraduate students were over 30 years of age, the vast majority between 30 and 49 years of age. Coursework higher degree students, the largest group of postgraduate students, tended to be older than other postgraduates. Although the data is not directly comparable with 1970s data, there does appear to have been an ageing of the postgraduate population as the proportion of coursework enrolments has increased.

Some change in student motivation is also apparent. While employment-related factors were less important than more intrinsic motivating factors in the 1970s, surveys of postgraduate students in the 1990s show that while many students continued to be motivated by interest, employment related factors were important to a majority of students in all types of courses (Ferrier and Martin 1991, Powles 1994, HEARU, Monash University 1992).

Expanding range of courses

Between 1975 and 1994 there was an enormous expansion in the number and type of postgraduate courses offered, particularly at the masters and sub-masters level. At the masters level most of these new courses are based on coursework, rather than research. Their titles indicate that these new courses are centred on some aspect of professional practice in the relevant discipline.

In the 1975 Monash University Arts Faculty handbook only three postgraduate courses are listed: an MA, a PhD and a Doctorate of Letters. The Masters degree and PhD are both research-based courses, though it is possible within the masters programme to combine various levels of research with some coursework. In contrast, the 1995 handbook shows a broader range of courses, some designed for particular careers. They include graduate diplomas specialising in 'professional studies', including Multicultural Studies. Welfare Administration, and Archives and Record Management. In addition to the M.Arts, two other masters degrees are available - in Bioethics, and in Environmental Science.

In 1975, postgraduate courses in Business and Economics were offered at Monash University within the faculty of Economics and Politics. Only four courses are listed: a Masters degree in Economics; a Masters degree in Administration; a PhD, and a Higher Doctorate. The two masters degree courses have different objectives and structures. The Masters in Economics is a research-based course for Economics graduates seeking a 'more theoretical training as a background to research or an academic career'. The Masters degree in Administration is 'an intensive programme of coursework' designed for students from any faculty — not necessarily Economics. The focus of this course is a career in administration — an objective being to teach students skills for effective management in the private and public sectors, with a specific reference to hospitals. Although very different, there is some potential for shared enrolments in the two courses — students undertaking the M.Economics programme are also able to undertake some coursework units offered within the M.Admin.

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[4] This section draws heavily on Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET), *Selected Higher Education Statistics 1994*, DEET Higher Education Division.

In 1995, over 40 postgraduate courses are listed, from graduate certificate level, to a PhD, with a majority offered at masters level. Most focus on a specific area of professional business practice, such as Accounting, Industrial Relations, or Public Policy. Course titles are similar at Graduate Diploma and Masters levels, indicative of the fact that the lower level course can be taken as a pathway to the Masters degree.

Implications of changes

Even the brief evidence presented here points to some substantial changes in postgraduate education:

- the number and type of courses has broadened, particularly at masters and sub-masters levels;
- there are more employment-related courses than in the past;
- employment-related factors have become more important in motivating student enrolment;
- the balance of enrolments has shifted toward coursework-based programmes;
- women have become a larger proportion of the postgraduate population;
- there are more part-time students, more students in employment, and more older students;
- the masters degree by coursework has replaced the research higher degree as the dominant course type.

The following section will briefly discuss how these changes relate to, or impact on, adult education.

Postgraduate education as adult education

The changes that have occurred in postgraduate education suggest that the roles and functions of this form of education are expanding. Traditionally viewed principally as preparation for new researchers and other academics, it now does much more. The broad range of courses provides graduates with opportunities to follow up an interest they develop in first degree study, or in their workforce experience; offers re-training for graduates in a new area can help graduates to gain additional skills that might improve their competency in their existing job; assist them to gain a promotion, or improve their quality of life. Graduates can study for a specialist qualification or to update the knowledge and skills they learned at first degree level which have become outdated as knowledge has expanded.

More courses have brought in more students — and a more diverse group of students. Postgraduate education is no longer confined only to an elite group of graduates. With more entry and exit points — and more pathways from one level to the next — it is now much more open to all graduates. A proven high level of academic merit is no longer a pre-requisite for entry. The most humble pass graduate and the highest achieving honours graduate can both participate.

Postgraduate education now offers graduates many opportunities for further and continuing education — the sort of opportunities that in the past were offered only outside the formal education system — in much more informal adult education settings. If this change were accompanied by a decline in demand for courses in the adult education sector, then it might indicate a shift from one sector to another. However, there is no evidence of this kind. On the contrary, it appears that the opportunities offered to adults in postgraduate education complement, rather than compete with, other forms of adult education. In its new form, postgraduate education appears to offer adults another avenue for pursuing the further education they seek.

Links between sectors

Just as postgraduate education is now more strongly vocational than in the past, vocational provision is also increasing in the adult education sector[5]. In Victoria, between 1991 and 1994, the total number of student contact hours devoted to adult education programmes designated as 'access and vocational programmes' increased substantially — by 153% in community-based providers of adult education, and by 112% in the central Council of Adult Education.[6]

In the same way that postgraduate education has responded to demand from students for work-related courses, my own research in Victoria[7] and a 1995 study conducted in NSW (McIntyre *et al.* 1993) indicates that adult education providers have been responding to demand for similar courses from employers, including banks, chambers of commerce, local councils and small businesses who want courses for their employees or potential employees; and from people wanting to increase their workforce skills. It is not surprising therefore that there appears to be a growing similarity between courses offered in the postgraduate sector and in the adult education sector.

Perhaps for this reason, and because as the postgraduate sector has become less elite, it has drawn on a larger section of the graduate population, the characteristics of students enrolled in postgraduate courses and in courses in the adult education sector are becoming more similar.

This similarity is not confined only to demographic characteristics, but also includes motivation. A recent study in NSW identified four groups of

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[5] Educational centres principally devoted to adult education comprise the adult education sector.

[6] Calculated from figures provided by the Board of Adult, Community and Further Education

[7] This research is as yet incomplete, but the tendencies are clear.

Postgraduate Students	Students in Adult Education
Most students are over 30 years of age; more than half between 30 and 49.	Ninety percent of students are between 25 and 54 years of age. (ABS 1995)
Most coursework students are in paid employment	The vast majority of students are in paid employment (ABS 1995)
All students have a first degree or equivalent qualification	Ninety percent of students report a vocational motive for participation (McIntyre et al 1993)
Most students are motivated by work-related factors.	Three-quarters of students have a post-school qualification. (ABS 1995a)
Women dominate enrolments at qualifying/diploma level, are almost half of students at Masters level, but there are fewer women at doctoral level.	Three quarters of students are women, although the gender balance varies by type of course (ABS 1995a)

students who enrol in Adult and Community Education (ACE) courses (McIntyre *et al* .1993):

- employed people who are seeking to improve their qualifications and skills in the workplace;
- unemployed people seeking to improve their chances of finding work;
- persons not in the labour force who are seeking the confidence or skills to possibly enter or re-enter the labour force or to recommence their education; and
- persons, regardless of their labour force status, who do courses for enjoyment or to develop skills for a host of non-vocational reasons. (McIntyre *et al*.1993, 28)

This list generally reflects the reasons given by students for enrolling in postgraduate coursework programmes (Ferrier and Martin 1991): to increase their employment prospects; for interest; to enhance their ability to perform their job; and to gain a specialist qualification.

Another significant difference between postgraduate education and adult education is also declining. Traditionally postgraduate courses have been formal, adult education sector courses informal. However, more courses in the adult education sector are becoming accredited and awarding certificates. A NSW study (McIntyre *et al.* 1993) found that the issue of accreditation looms large for all adult education providers and that larger providers in particular see 'a need to make strategic decisions about what courses are accredited and where ACE links to vocational providers' (p 49). The study found that as the adult education sector has moved to fill a gap for short-term courses, pressure to formally accredit some programmes has strengthened. Pressures for formal accreditation have come particularly from students, and especially from students in career-linked courses. One reason for accreditation is to facilitate articulation with other courses, in other settings.

When postgraduate education was dominated by research-based courses for future academics, possibilities for formal articulation with courses in the adult education sector were virtually non-existent. Now, however, the prospects for developing stronger links between the two sectors appear to be growing. Not only do the two appear to attract many of the same students, but as the adult education sector expands its range of vocational programmes many courses are being offered that could transfer into postgraduate coursework programmes at sub-masters or masters level.

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The significance of African-American language and learning in an adult education context: 'going back to our roots'

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Terms like 'Africanisms in the Gullah dialect' (Turner, 1944) Black Dialect (Labov 1960), Negro Speech (Wolfram 1969), Black English (Dillard 1972), and Ebonics (Williams 1975) have been used interchangeably to describe the language of African-Americans. Most recently the term African-American language has been used to depict a linguistic system that is rule governed and its validation lies within its cultural and racial foundation. Some linguists have traced the language forms back to Africa, while others have traced it to African-American slaves. According to McGinnis (1975):

> African slaves spoke a variety of languages when they were shipped to North American plantations. Most of the languages were of a distinct West African type, but some consisted of a great deal of pigeon English and others of a Portuguese pigeon. On the plantations, a common language emerged among the slave population. It became the principle means of communication. It was a rather 'simplified' version of English, which underwent many changes through use by successive generations. (1975, 4)

As early as 1949, Turner studied the Gullah dialect spoken by the inhabitants of the Sea Islands and discovered many traces of African language features. He concluded that there were definite linguistic features of African language systems among the Gullah people. He further concluded that the African-American Language was influenced by West African and Niger Congo Languages, such as Bambura, Ewe, Fanta, Wolof, Yoruba, Mandinka, Mende.

The language used among African-Americans has historically been characterised as deviant, deficient or at best different. In the last 30 years, studies (Brown 1980; Giles, Bourhis and Taylor 1977; LeMoine 1995; Labov 1972; Taylor 1968; Wolfram 1969; Wolfram and Fasold 1974) have analysed and assessed the ways in which African-Americans use the English language to communicate with one another as well as individuals outside of their communities. These studies add much to understanding the linguistic rules that govern African-American speech and contribute to determining the varied dialects within African-American communities (Labov 1972; Wolfram 1969; Wolfram and Fasold 1974).

Additional studies have also provided evidence of African-American learners' abilities to 'code switch' or 'style switch' (Edwards 1986; Faerch 1987; Labov 1972; Wyatt and Seymour 1990) to communicate outside their communities. While these studies have provided us with a framework for exploring Black English, they have also created what Hoover (1990) refers to as a 'deficiency philosophy that supports a negative view of the cultures of people of colour, negatively affecting educational policies and the direction of research'.

Furthermore, most of these studies have targeted population sets at the K-12 level. As a result of these studies, rules have been created to: 1) document the phonological, morphological and syntactic forms; 2) provide a basic understanding of the language and its historical foundation; 3) legitimate African-American language as a function of its culture; and 4) raise African-American children. Most of these studies were developmental in nature and provide limited information about the implications of these forms and structures on African-American adult speaking patterns.

Furthermore, even though rules exist to explain the African-American Language, this form still has not achieved legitimisation as a form of discourse either inside or outside its own community. This has become most evident in the recent debates that have ensued as a result of the Oakland, CA school board decision concerning the use of Ebonics as a way to facilitate the use of Standard English by African-American children (December 18, 1996).

This has grave concerns not only for young children, but for adults as well. Once an individual leaves the confines of the K-12 school system, they are expected to use what is considered Standard English, thus placing African-American adults in a position where they are expected to employ 'bidialectical competence' in educational and professional settings.

Flowers and Sheared (1996) offered an analysis of African-American adult learners' speech patterns on learning in an Adult Basic Education classroom. This study concluded that African-American adults employ language structures and forms that are consistent with communalism and sharing, according to the African-centred philosophy of 'Nguzo Saba' (Asante 1987), which promotes unity, sharing, and community responsibility. Through this communal sharing the polyrhythmic realities (Brown 1990; Sheared 1994) of the learners surface as a way of helping them gain control and power over their learning experiences. Particular focus in this study was given to an exploration of the polyrhythmic realities and the effect it had on the language adult learners used to communicate with teachers and peers in the learning environment, as well as other settings (Flowers and Sheared 1996).

Based on these preliminary findings recommendations were made to conduct further study to determine whether this was consistent with our understanding of how language influences language patterns and learning, as well as the principles of Nguzo Saba. Additionally the following recommendation were made:

> 1. Adult basic education teachers and speech language pathologists should encourage group think through dialogue and group discussion ...
> 2. Teachers and speech language pathologists should encourage the use of language that reflects community and sharing ...
> 3. Teachers and speech language pathologists should develop needs assessments that reflect the polyrhythmic realities (that is, their roles and functions, race, class, gender, language, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) of their students. (AERC, Conference Proceedings)

This is the second phase of an on-going study examining African-American language and its functions and effects on how students use their home language to achieve power and control over their learning environments. The preliminary findings and research concerning deficiency of African-Americans speech patterns led us to an examination of the following assumptions: a) African-Americans use an inferior linguistic system which must be remediated before they can actively participate and learn in a classroom; b) the African-American Language is not a legitimate way of communicating in American society; c) the African-American language is viewed as being used by individuals that are less intelligent and/or academically inferior.

Methodology

The following questions guided this study: a) What language patterns begin to emerge in African-American adult learners' communication? b) Does black dialect, code switching or style switching effect African-American adults communication in the learning environment? c) How does 'communalism and sharing' affect African-Americans language use in the learning environment? d) Does 'communalism and sharing' offer an alternative interpretation to Black dialect, code and/or style switching as a way to determine effective communication in a learning environment? e) What impact does language have on the lived experience (polyrhythmic realities) of adult learners? f) How do African-American adult learners interpret their language and its impact upon communicating their knowledge and experiences?

Procedures

This study duplicated the methodology used by Edwards (1986) to examine language choice and communicative intent among Black British adults and adolescents. A combination of qualitative (Glaser and Strauss 1967), Africentric Feminist (Hill-Collins 1990) and quantitative research (Patton 1990) methods were used. Interviews were audio taped and video taped over a period of two months. Three schools were contacted and agreed to participate in this study. The findings in this report are based on the audiotapes, videotapes and interviews collected in Site A. A total of twelve African-American adults attending adult basic education programmes were interviewed. A total of twenty students were audio taped and videotaped. Speech and language sample analysis of the narratives were performed to determine linguistic structure and content (Miller and Chapman 1985).

Results

This report will address the questions asked above. According to Cusher *et al.* (1992), 'language and communication can bind or tear people apart' (1992, 74). In the learning environment we noted that the African-American language patterns were consistent both in and outside the learning environment.

While the methodologies and techniques employed by educators are often described as being highly significant in promoting the learners' understanding, this study suggests that it is the communication patterns employed by both teacher and learners that help facilitate the learning process. Even though the instructor used examples from the lived experiences of the AA learners and they (the learners) in turn responded in class with their own interpretations, when asked about those events, the AA learners were unaware of how those realities affected their learning. This is consistent with Hill-Collins' (1992) explanation of the ways in which African-Americans view their world. That is, the analysis employed within the African-American context is presented in a way in which one looks at the whole and not at the parts. The African-American takes the whole of what is given and uses that, rather than tearing it apart to determine its meaning. It is through the language that they 'symbolically store the knowledge of their culture which shapes their perception, values and behaviour'.

Metaphors

Metaphors were often used by both teachers and students to communicate and acknowledge their understanding of one another. However, even though the teacher and the students often used parables and sayings to clarify information, when interviewed most students did not or could not make a connection between the use of these parables as a way to facilitate their learning. The only metaphors the participants could recall in the interviews were the ones they might have heard in their homes. For instance Examples of this are:

> Participant 8a: When you lie with dogs, you git fleas ...
>
> Participant 9a: She put her foot in it...

Holt (1975) concludes that

> Metaphor functions as a devise for promoting and maintaining the black world view, which is our frame of reference for analysis. The complexity of understanding in the frequent use (and other ethnotrops) in all probability represents to some degree reinterpretations of the African world view. Since Black Americans are descendants of West Africans...the African world view in part still reflects itself in the Black Americans use of communication. This view considers communication the art of performance. Performance is a presentation of self, which reflects the value of sheer personal being, of respect for the individuals integrity and interpersonal relations. (1975, 89, 90)

She goes on to state (1975) in her essay on 'Metaphor, Black Discourse Style and Cultural Reality', 'the new search for knowledge about the black experience must achieve synthesis with black cultural reality if an authentic understanding of educational goals for blacks is to be gained.

Polyrhythmic realities

Therefore language is only one mode used to communicate one's understanding of information as it is transmitted in the classroom. It was quite clear that the students' polyrhythmic realities played a significant role in facilitating their understanding of the words used (language) and the way they viewed themselves both in the world (their communities, their homes) and the learning environment (classroom situations).

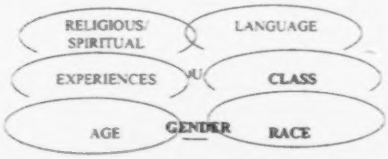

DIAGRAM 1: POLYRHYTHMIC REALITIES (MULTIPLE/INTERSECTING REALITIES)

The way that one constructs one's views and perception of the self (who am I) in relation to others (family, society) is grounded in both their and realities. This reality is the connection with and between race, class, gender, language, religion (spirituality) experiences (family, social). It is influenced by issues of power and control as it is embedded within the social constructions between the socio-political economic factors that operate within a given society. Just as in music, harmony, tones, and notes blend themselves together to make one melody, the individual must blend their both and realities into one whole in order to begin to make sense of the word and the world. As we look at this from an African-centred context, the individual learns to construct a reality that helps him/her survive wherever they are (Sheared 1997).

In this study, age, religion, life experiences, race, class and gender played a significant impact upon how information was transmitted and used by the learners and the teacher. Age was an extremely critical factor as it related to communication style and language used among both the older and younger adults. This was quite evident in the way the teacher had grouped them. This was also apparent in how they processed and completed their assignments. Religion and education were viewed by most as being necessary for the improvement of one's spiritual and intellectual growth and learning. Religious parables were often used by both the instructor and the students to clarify the readings they had undertaken in both small and large group discussions. Even though the assignments were not of a religious nature, both biblical passages and parables were often used to clarify the points they discussed.

Language

While the language structures and forms that have been identified by sociolinguists and linguists as distinctive Black language (dialect, Ebonics), the African-American adult learners did not consider the way they spoke as being different or distinct from standard English. In fact when asked and given examples of standard, Black or slang language, some referred to Black English as Standard English and standard English as Black English, thus seeing no difference between two language systems.

Participants in this study were asked:

> Do you think that Black English is standard English, non-standard English, incorrect grammar, a language or a dialect?

One participant responded:

> Well, I tell ya wa...wha we raise up to....well I thank it standard because that all we know right?

Even though they did not make major distinctions between Black English and Standard English they did make a distinction between Black English, Standard English and Slang. Slang was seen as something they used primarily with their friends and in non-formal settings, whereas Black English/Standard English was used primarily in formal school and work/business situations.

In this study language is viewed as a medium for communicating ideologies, knowledge, and cultural capital. Because of the differences in age and experiences, the use of language in the classroom in this study was a critical factor to aiding communication and understanding. Even though the students did not note any major differences between Black English and standard English, it became clear to the researchers that the ways in which language was constructed and used by these learners was different. There was a lot of familiarity with and between them and their teacher. Moreover, the complexity of the speech patterns spoken by the African-Americans in this study, made it clear that 'communicators' (all people) need to become familiar with culture, history and language in order to understand one another.

In order to aid our understanding, a variety of linguistic measures were employed to describe the patterns that emerged from the data. The linguistic forms used to characterise the language spoken by African-Americans presented a pattern of speech and speaking which varies phonologically (sound), morphologically (grammatic structure), syntactically (sentence structure), semantically (work meaning), and pragmatically (language use). These features paired with social variables presented linguistic patterns typically observed in Black dialect speakers. The following patterns are examples used by the participants in this study that exemplify Black dialect as it was used within the context of the classroom.

It should also be noted, that black English has non verbal characteristics which are included to help define a message. This may be introduced into the communication through gesture, by way of body movement, proximity, and kinesthetics.

Linguistic Patterns

Black Dialect	**Example**
Phonological	
Final Consonant Deletion	goin/going, look
Consonant Cluster Reduction/Simplification	col/cold fin/find
R-lessness	Ka'en/Karen
Stopping of Fricative	dis/this and dem/them
Lack of contrast in vowels	pin/pen
Morphological	
Plurals	'two incident ha'pin'
Hyperpluralisation	many mens
Syntactical	
Zero Copula	He goin/He is going
Negation	He don't know nofin. I ain't got no guilt.
Semantics	
Redefine	'Perpetratin'/ Pretending

Paralanguage characteristics also help in defining the communication. This includes the vocal qualities such as pitch, intonation, pausing, and fluency. A message is often defined by how it is said, rather than what is said.

Conclusions

Adult educators are being asked to educate and retrain African-American adults so that they can fully participate in the American educational process and workforce. They are being asked not only to educate and retrain them, but they are asked to teach them how to communicate effectively. This study challenges the assumptions that AAL is: 1) an inferior linguistic system which needs remediating; 2) not a legitimate way of communicating in American society, therefore not acceptable by most; and 3) is viewed as being used by individuals that are unintelligent or academically inferior. This study begins to offer an alternative way of viewing AAL usage in the learning environment, as well as other settings. It expands upon the idea that communalism and sharing are specific traits that are rooted within the African-American culture and is expressed in our language, familial relationships, religion, education, music, and dance, work ethics — our polyrhythmic realities.

Language is the tool used to articulate one's understanding of the word and the world. Educators must further their understanding of cultural norms, language forms, and moral beliefs of their students' culture. Educators must become aware of the lived experiences of the learners as well as their own, otherwise the knowledge that is transmitted will only consist of that from the dominant framework. The both/and realities of the learners (that is the realities they bring from their family and community, and that which evolves from the dominant culture) are critical to assisting them decode what is being transmitted both within and outside of the learning environment. This study concludes therefore, that an understanding of the polyrhythmic realities aids the teacher as well as the students develop relationships that allow them with opportunities to deconstruct the hegemonic relationships that exists within and outside of traditional learning environments. This requires that we as educators go back to the roots of one's history, language, and culture, experiences, race, class, gender, and religion in order to create learning communities that reflect individual differences and similarities.

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Intimate cultures of learning: re-positioning the boundaries of adult learning in paradoxical times

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> But all we can confess of what we are
> Has in it the defeat of isolation —
> If not our own, then someone's, anyway
> (*Stepping Backward* — Adrienne Rich)

This paper proved almost impossible to write and we are not talking about the problem in attaining an intellectual acuity necessary for translating two sets of jumbled thoughts and feelings into the kind of analytical framework that this forum requires. That task is hard enough, but place its demands amidst the contingencies of two middle-aged lives, and the several personal and professional selves they inhabit, and it is a near miracle that the paper was written at all in what have been uncertain, transitional times for both of us. That is the main point of the paper: locating considerations of adult learning, including our own, in a culture of profound insecurity and subjective fragmentation. We want to explore the border country between the personal and the academic, selves and others, feelings and intellect, the intimate and the cultural, and to attempt to reposition the boundaries of adult learning in the process.

Let us consider some of our own personal difficulties: one of us had just been relocated within their institution from a Department of Continuing Education to an Institute of Medical Sciences. The move was partly the result of a policy decision to incorporate continuing education and shift responsibility for the adult learner from a distinct department, with its roots in the extramural tradition, to the mainstream departments of the University. At the point of writing this paper, our colleague was struggling with the demands, not only of a different department and discourse, but with an institution which had 'moved with the times' and erased a particular historical space hitherto reserved for the needs of the mature student. The other author of this piece was finalising three large funding bids; failure to complete or secure the monies would mean the cessation of a whole programme of work which fell outwith mainstream budgeting because it did not conform to recognised or accredited 'outcome' requirements. In the middle of these professional dilemmas securing the time necessary for reflection, and intellectual rigour, became a major problem.

Let us also consider further difficulties inherent in out struggle. A paper such as this has to conform to a particular pattern. If it is co-authored then compromises have to be reached so that a distinctive voice can emerge. Why should this be a problem? We have worked closely together for several years. We have undertaken research together and taught and trained together. We inhabit the same educational world and yet there are differences which affect the rhythm and tenor of our responses and thence of our voices. One of us is married with a nine year old child, the other is sharing a life but not living with a same sex partner. One is English, the other Scottish; both are white; one is a man the other a woman. We inhabit the same world, share the same political and educational commitment and yet experience that world in ways contingent upon the exigencies of our different histories, genders and sexual orientation. Of course, this is true of each and every person at the Conference, and so why do we linger on difficulties which we all share?

A challenge

The answer lies in the challenge we set ourselves in the title: *Intimate cultures of learning, the re-positioning of boundaries in paradoxical times*. Our basic argument is that 'the cultures of learning' which we have inherited and utilised have singularly failed to articulate or encompass the myriad complexities and potentialities which form and inform the adult learner, including us, in diverse settings. Our analysis derives from a number of key premises. We argue that the present is deeply paradoxical. There are hitherto unknown spaces for women and men to experiment with identities, selves, relationships and more diverse lifestyles. But this 'freedom' is played out in the context of bewildering biographical discontinuities brought about by the economic and political realities, as well as the cultural fragmentations, of late capitalist modernity; these include the impact of globalisation and the crises of universalist meta-narratives including those of science and progress (Giddens 1991; Frosh 1991).

We argue that the 'freedoms' to experiment are relative; that whilst this particular audience can engage in a degree of theoretical debate as to the nature of adult learning at the turn of the twentieth century, most of us are also struggling to make sense of the promise of a better world set against the daily, frightening realities of redundancy, over, under or unemployment, emotional and relational breakdown and the bewildering impact of a technological revolution which has bombarded us with more 'information' in the last ten years than the previous 5,000. We agree with the poststructuralists that the 'enlightenment project' is dead: that the notion of a singular self embarked upon a linear journey from the cradle to the grave and accruing experience, knowledge and thence opportunity as enhancements and incremental points along the way is simplistic at best, and cruelly irrelevant at worst. It fails to take account of the fractures and fragments that constitute our lives. And yet we disagree with the poststructuralists that everything is relative because we regard that argument as symptomatic of fragmentation rather than an analysis of it; and as failing to account for the fundamental human need for sense, meaning and psychological continuity no matter what degree of fracture surrounds the endeavour

> Mariner unpractised,
> In this chartless zone
> Every navigator
> Fares unwarned, alone
> Each his own Magellan
> In tropics of sensation:
> Not a fire-scorched stone
> From prior habitation,
> Not an archaic hull
> Splintered on the beach.
> These are latitudes revealed
> Separate to each.
> *(Unsounded* — Adrienne Rich*)*

Objects and subjects

This is why we have placed ourselves, as authors, at the centre of our introduction. Traditionally, the academy has posited the 'adult learner' as an object for scrutiny. Theories abound as to needs, motivations, expectations and the nature of learning. From the conclusions derived, further conclusions have arisen which have specified particular pedagogic models to enhance opportunity and maximise self-fulfilment. But we suggest these theories emanate, in turn, from particular ideological bases which fail significantly to address the 'messy contradictions' which characterise the realities determining our lives and choices. We are placed at the heart of this paper because we want to start by breaking down the false divide between the 'adult learner' and ourselves, the academic and the personal. As participants at this conference we will have brought to this session degrees of confusion, anxiety, personal preoccupation; as do students in our programmes. Like other learners, perhaps, we are expected to make sense of our world and subsume our differences, anxieties and contradictions within an intellectual discourse which, at least until recently, has required objectivity and rationality. It is the totalising terms of this historic academic discourse that we question.

Andragogy and its constraints

There are two main strands to our argument. The first takes issue with certain influential adult learning theories. The second begs the more fundamental question as to the appropriateness of couching a discussion within rationalist terms. These are dictated by an academic discourse which itself is part of the progressive enlightenment project delineated, in turn, by specific historical, political and economic imperatives. Existing accounts of adult learning are, we believe, narrow, partial and inadequate and derive largely from male, middle-class experience which, reflecting wider hegemonic cultural values, valorise status and success at the expense of intimacy and emotional life. 'Andragogy', for example, claims to represent a distinct theory of adult learning; but in privileging autonomy and objectivity above relatedness and subjective understanding seems rooted in a 'masculinist', predominantly North American construction of experience and value. Malcolm Knowles (1980) notes that in order to distinguish between the teaching of children — pedagogy — and the teaching of adults, educators coined the label 'andragogy' which is based on the Greek word *aner* (with the stem *andr-*) meaning 'man, not boy' or 'adult'. He continues:

> So if you ask adults who they are they are likely to identify themselves by describing what their occupations are, where they have worked, where they have travelled, what their training and experience have equipped them to do, and what their achievements have been. Adults are what they have done.

His theoretical model was largely derived from a combination of Maslow's 'hierarchy of human needs' and Erikson's 'eight ages of man' (see Fraser 1994), which elucidates the stages to be travelled towards maturation. Knowles' model includes the journey from dependence to autonomy, from passivity to activity, from subjectivity to objectivity from ignorance to enlightenment, from self-rejection to self acceptance. He concludes:

> When people define themselves as adults...they see themselves increasingly as producers or doers...They see themselves as being able to make their own decisions and face the consequences, to manage their own lives.

We applaud some aspects of this recipe for personal autonomy yet it is ahistoric and lacks awareness of how the story is shaped by the values of the wider culture. And we need to ask just how relevant the model is for untold numbers of women in our culture whose predefined 'caring and sharing' roles are at constant variance with their strivings for personal maturation. And how does the model accord with the experiences of those men and women for whom under or unemployment has fractured their sense of *being*, stripped, as they have been, of the roles and social contexts by which they determined themselves? For those at the margins of political, economic and social power, the notion that they 'are what they have done' can sound more like a slap in the face than a term of encouragement; and we are reminded that there are far greater structural barriers to opportunity and fulfilment than simply an acknowledgement of individual potential. Culture, including its economic relations of power and powerlessness, needs to be brought into the analytical equation.

The andragogic model has formed the basis of much work undertaken in the fields of experiential or lifelong learning. Assessment of Prior and Experiential Learning programmes abound and have become generally accepted as a means of acknowledging greater individual potential. Diverse sources of learning are supposedly valued in these contexts as are the competencies derived from them. But the process tends to assume a coherent and unified subject 'I', who can reflect on experience, extricate the learning gained and use that learning as a means towards greater self-esteem; usually by translating the relevance of the learning to vocational or educational requirements. Except this begs three basic questions about:

- the concept of a unified subject enjoying equality of opportunity
- the concept of 'experience' as coherent, consistent and a site for rational intellectual excavation
- parity between learning gained in one arena and the skills and competencies demanded by another

Certain experiences and modes of expression are acceptable; others are not. This is true whether the arena is an educational conference or the shop floor. All modes of social engagement are regulated by discourses which, in turn, reflect the relative powers and correspondent 'equalities' measured out by cultural, political and socio-economic interests. Whether we are talking about individuals at the first stage of private recollection and reflection or at the point where they seek public recognition for the value of their experiences, social or regulatory practices inform and construct each step of the way. The stories we tell about ourselves and the sense that we make of our lives reflect the ways the latter are constructed through and in relation to dominant narratives. The extent to which we self-censor our experiences, 'select' the most 'relevant' and 'choose' the arenas where we can utilise the learning gained reveals the nature of those regulatory practices. To put it another way, the process tells us who, or what, may be pulling the strings. The discourse which governs much of our current educative endeavour has become highly functionalist and utilitarian; the strings which form this 'package' are strangling human potential by reducing learning to marketable commodities in the service of a particular economic order. The point of educational delivery is increasingly to fit people into an existing system rather than to challenge it. Notions of experiential, lifelong and adult learning have, to an extent at least, been incorporated within individualistic, economistic, new right narratives.

This brings us to the related question of the nature of adult learning as a coherent discourse in its own terms. Those of us in the United Kingdom (and, increasingly, educators in countries such as Canada which inherited aspects of the British tradition) who have been working in the field of adult education for the past two decades might be forgiven for staring balefully at the relentless machinery which has ploughed up our pastures and sold off our plots in the interests of 'mainstreaming' and/or economic efficiency. Of course, the notion of 'lifelong learning' is a Good Thing; but if the medical profession is or ought to be doing it, if large corporations are doing it, then what language is left to articulate a space for the adult learner beyond the overriding agendas of professional and business interests? This is not wallowing in empty nostalgia for a Golden Age of adult education, at least in the British context. The land that we tilled was never simply green and pleasant. But there was some integrity to our soil nourished as it was by a widely shared belief in the value of learning 'for its own sake' and a commitment to social change.

Yet there were problems too. The difficulty with the old beliefs, and our relation to them, is that they also stemmed from the enlightenment project. Adult education might have included a radical agenda, but the Great Tradition of British adult education whose demise we lament (the student's choice of subject, the relation of disciplines to actual contemporary living and the parity of general discussion with expert instruction (Goldman 1995)), was predicated upon a particular reading of the concept of progress which has become highly questionable. One of the cornerstones of the Western epistemological position has been the relationship between the 'knower' and the 'known'; between the individual and the 'outside world'; between the subject and society. This robust expression of individuality went hand-in-glove with positivism (the objectivity of science) and empiricism (the objectivity of rational thinking). God was not dead ... yet. But as Henriques and others (1984) point out an all-embracing humanism (tended) 'to see the individual as the agent of all social phenomena and the production including knowledge'.

It was Marx of course who attacked the bourgeois complacency of the notion of the 'free individual' and Freud compounded the problem of the coherent 'I' by asserting the power of the unconscious and of the irrational elements in our psyche which may mock reason and challenge rationality with the dark play of hidden desires. In the face of the intellectual inadequacy of the notion of a coherent 'I', feminists and poststructuralists have struggled towards the idea of a transformative politics based upon a more sophisticated and reflexive analysis of ourselves as multiple subjects. How do we deal with social and economic inequity and with the contradictions we encounter within ourselves in realising and being responsible for the myriad roles we have to play? How do we articulate a narrative of learning which recognises and acknowledges the levels of pain and vulnerability which are central to our human experience as well as the fragmenting subjectivity of the diverse, often contradictory roles we are expected to perform (at work, in intimate relationships, as citizens and consumers, and at a conference such as this)?

> Adult learners do not bring their experiences with them into education; they are their experience (Knowles 1978). But the answers to the real complexities and challenges of this idea do not seem to lie simply in modular programmes, access courses, distance- or open-learning initiatives, experiential learning or andragogy. They lie in much finer nuances of expressing respect, concern and care for individuals, and in giving priority to the need for adults to build upon and make sense of their own and others' 'life worlds' (Wildemeersch 1989)

Our response, as educators, is to go beyond the empiricism privileged by the academy. Or for that matter the 'foundational disciplines' — particularly sociology and psychology — which have tended to dived learning, as well as society and the 'self', into false dualities. Mainstream psychology tends to be ahistoric and has neglected fundamental questions as to how the person becomes a 'subject' at all in its obsession with 'rigorous' procedures and what can be directly observed. Sociology, in it structuralist guises, fetishes systems while relegating intimate life to an epiphenomenal status (West 1996). We argue, instead, for a discourse of adult learning which encompasses three interconnected levels of analysis:

- the cultural, which recognises that some people and their 'stories' matter more than others. We should encourage the articulation and reclamation of lives and narratives which are scripted in difference, and challenge the privilege accorded to stories from particular class, gender, sexuality and ethnic positions.
- the learning dimension which recognises the crucial role of the tutor or facilitator. As practitioners we must challenge the inequity of the 'expert' role, make our stories available and encourage an emotional democracy within the classroom.
- the intimate inter and intra-subjective dimension which acknowledges that a healthy mental life, and the composition of a more authentic presence, depend upon the primacy of good, loving object relations and a capacity admit vulnerability in times of uncertainty and frightening change (West 1996).

In the latter context, we believe that some psychoanalytic theory can contribute to a better understanding of the roots and dynamics of a stronger emotional as well as an intellectual life. Psychoanalysis, unlike mainstream psychology, places the study of individual experience, and its inter-subjective origins, at its core. Traditionally such theories derived from biological or essentialist views of human nature in which the structure of personality was largely innate. More recently, in the work of relational theory (defining this broadly to include object relationists such as Klein and Winnicott and self psychologists such as Kohut and some feminist psychoanalytical perspectives), stress is placed on the crucial role of good enough relationships and a supportive environment in the creation of confident inner states. This brings the cultural and social into a psychology of learning by making the development and expression of a more confident, assured selfhood intimately dependent on others and, by extension, upon wider patterns of relationship and power.

The relevance of such a framework has been discerned in biographical studies of adult learners in fractured communities as well as in the women's and black consciousness movements. What seems to be involved in psychic transformation is a revisioning of self in the eyes and responses of similar others; and/or a beneficial cycle of desire, identification and re-appropriation of a stronger subjectivity through relationships with those who themselves successfully transcend oppression (West 1996; Frosh 1991). The framework connects the intellectual with the emotional, the social with the psychic, the self and others in intimate cultures of learning. This discourse tends to be more gynagogic, rather than andragogic but we are not seeking to replace the gender bias inherent in andragogy with a similar bias in the other direction; rather to signpost the need for a synthesis between the affective and self-affirming and the socially critical and liberatory. An emotional literacy, combined with critical intelligence, can help people to fight back in uncertain times, on more of their own terms, composing more open lives, democratised cultures and a reinvigorated civil society.

> Such a composition has nothing to do with eternity,
> the striving for greatness, brilliance —

only with the musing of a mind
one with her body, experienced fingers quietly pushing
dark against bright, silk against roughness,
pulling the tenets of a life together
with no mere will to mastery
only care for the many-lived, unending
forms in which she finds herself,
becoming now the sherd of broken glass
slicing light in a corner, dangerous
to flesh, now the plentiful, soft leaf
that wrapped round the throbbing finger, soothes the wound;
and now the stone foundation, rockshelf further
forming underneath everything that grows.
(*The Dream of a Common Language* — Adrienne Rich)

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Technologies of compliance in training

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In post-industrial workplaces, training can be theorised as a 'technology' that controls the systematic organisation of knowledge. Training is more than a symbol of the shift in the location of labour in relation to commodity production. Training does not 'simply' upskill workers. It can and does enable new forms of control and surveillance over them. Training for post-industrial work thus has a disciplinary agenda and this is rarely surfaced. We argue that training as a significant site and set of practices in the design of corporate culture is a technology for designing employees.

In this paper we seek to uncover the ways trainers (as employees) are themselves seduced by corporate reward/punishment systems. We draw on Foucault's theorisations of technologies of power, which determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to a certain kind of domination, and technologies of the self:

> which permit individuals to effect by their own means a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being. (Foucault 1988, 18)

Mindful of Foucault's (1982) argument that power is always productive, 'not merely repressive of culture' (in Du Gay 1996, 63), our analysis probes the ways in which training is a part of the systematic array of technologies through which workers are shaped. Although discourses of workplace reform and training certainly arise in specific political contexts, they do not 'simply' reflect those contexts as if they are pre-given. These discourses actively create new ways for people *to be* at work. As there is an active component to the human technologies and techniques of 'developing staff', the paper concludes by asking whether training can offer something that is better than an alignment of workers to the new words and languages of workplace performativity.

The technologies

- Central to our theorisation of 'training as a technology' is our argument that there are four complementary and interrelated technologies linked to the deliberate corporate fashioning of employee identities. Our analysis centres on workers being seduced by:
- the rhetoric of **empowerment** – the corporate promise of participation in decision making processes with an accompanying sense of 'ownership'
- the promise of **belonging** – the construction of a sense of team-work, community and 'corporate-family' bonds
- the promise of **reward** – the alignment of promotion and wages with skill levels, work-titles, image and status for increased 'flexibility' and productivity
- the rhetoric of **difference** – the promise of valuing diverse knowledges, skills and experiences.

These technologies are not merely repressive and it is precisely their positive aspects which makes them appear so plausible. Indeed, the seductive power of these four technologies is compounded by their overlaps, their interrelationships and their connectedness to workers' conceptions of who they are.

1) The rhetoric of empowerment

New forms of post-Fordist management are technologies designed to transform organisational and corporate cultures in order to capitalise on global conditions of competitiveness. With reduced need for manual work, social labour requires *intellectually trained* workers who possess both specialised skills and the 'flexibility' to perform as required by their corporation. In order to fully utilise its flexible-specialists contemporary corporations have developed a rhetoric about 'worker empowerment'. Empowered, self-directed workers are meant to reflect the flat/lateral work-hierarchies that characterise post-Fordist workplaces. They are a part of an economic/managerial formula that rests on a re-configured form of human capital theory.

The re-configuration assumes worker autonomy, dynamic decision-making and more democratised work arrangements. Workers are *trained to be empowered*. Trainers are thus temporary sources of the empowerment text. They direct a few moments in the corporate participation process. The message of training is, however, one that seeks compliance. Trainers are not empowered to demand any significant changes. They are meant to convey to trainees the importance of attaining 'shared goals' or work towards the 'total quality' required by the corporation.

Our concern about the rhetoric of worker empowerment is not so much that it is illusory, but more about what the illusion represents. There is a belief amongst many new wave managers that empowerment offers greater worker freedoms, more rewarding work environments and unprecedented opportunities for personal and professional advancement. Those who argue against this 'logic' may be painted as 'negative' at best.

The denial of negativity is meant to offer new forms of liberation for workers. It rests upon a logic of human consciousness that is purely positive. Questioning must take appropriate forms or it is rendered inappropriate thus attracting corporate sanctions. Pure positivity has become the corporate rule-game, with knowledge no longer possessing the 'shadow-side' which always demands a cost. As Letiche (1990, 237) puts it, training becomes 'a product of this epistemological shift in values ... with the goal of training to convey purely positive knowledge'.

While the corporate construction of worker empowerment is highly dubious, it does not face serious criticism. Some resistant trainers will doubt the message, of course, but when training jobs are scarce or being 'devolved' to other workers such as line-managers and mentors, it is easier to play along. Besides, the rhetoric is easy to play along with — it contains the humanistic qualities that have, in the past, motivated many corporate trainers. It also contains a rhetoric derived, ironically given its location in high-capital, from Fabian socialism — about working more co-operatively in teams — becoming more a part of the corporate family.

2) The promise of belonging

The lure of belonging is a powerful one. Workers now belong to the corporate family, symbolically represented in the proliferation of logos and corporate images that are embedded within all written documentation and realised in the selective use of democratic language such as *we, our, shared*. This helps to foster a sense of community given its accompanying, yet perhaps mythical, characteristics of belonging and security.

The corporate family with its multiple and complex levels, departments and relationships, may capture a sense of an extended family. But workers also belong to teams, a tighter nuclear family equivalent, and these teams are sold as autonomous units, promising a boundary, belonging and protection from the potentially chaotic, dispersed, fragmented workplace in which flexibility, changing roles and responsibilities result in unpredictable social relationships. At times the result is a decentring of one's self thus making 'belonging' a powerful lure.

Belonging to the corporate family and to the team rides on the notion of reciprocity where employee commitment to the new team arrangements result in increased participation, energy and output, rewarded by whatever the organisation has to offer; in this case a sense of autonomy, protection, responsibility and financial rewards.

However such reciprocity has its costs! There are problems with the protection offered by the promise of belonging. How does protection figure in the surveillance in the form of information technologies that monitor input and output on an individual basis and where your colleagues are assessing your competencies? And how does protection actually work against a backdrop of large-scale downsizing or company re-engineering?

The cost of reciprocity is also realised in the emotional effect of the new 'corporate family' on the lives of workers. Contemporary management and training literature continue an almost exclusive coverage of building learning organisations and family-style participatory structures, glossing over deeper issues such as the *emotional toll* upon selves. The new partnerships, the family-style learning organisations, seek to absorb more and more of the worker's self into the organisation — the organisation which, above all else, must perform competitively.

The social structuring of work — the new designer work-culture — is significant for psychological functioning as it profoundly affects people's views of reality. There are reciprocal relations among work, occupation and personality. Weber (1958) also highlights religiosity. This reciprocity is exploited in contemporary corporate practices through 'real world' corporate and industrial practices and discourses, and results in individual tensions including conflicts between personal values and professional demands. What people do and learn in their work carries over into other spheres of their lives. Their cognitive functions, values, priorities in life and conceptions of themselves are influenced by the 'lessons' of work.

In order to belong, designer work cultures seek a precise alignment of a person's values, attitudes and abilities with the needs of the organisation. Any traits that might impede work, or are unnecessary, are suppressed. Attributes of toughness, aggressiveness, decisiveness and individual competence are truly prized in the corporate reward systems, as the following section explains.

3) The promise of reward

Workplace reward systems are normally accepted as givens. They are often exempted from critical scrutiny due to powerful interests vested in them. We are, however, theorising corporate reward systems as 'technologies of power' in which individuals submit to certain ends in order to be rewarded. It is the dialectic of submission/reward that we think warrants scrutiny. To understand this dialectic, corporate reward systems need to be viewed as tied to, not only power, but also 'technologies of sign systems' (Foucault 1988, 18). For corporate trainers this technology can be expressed through *processes* of training. They are in positions of trust and contemporary corporations stress the issue of trust. It is a part of the 'belonging' to which we have referred. In turn, this is a reward for 'fitting-in'.

Increasingly, but not conclusively, the new corporate culture's effort to establish team bonds and emotional commitments among team members is effective in obtaining this compliant fitting-in. As Lasch (1984) argues, 'the team-family culture bolsters a fragile corporate self formed under the influence of traditional hierarchies and weakened by the cultural narcissism of advanced industrial society' (in Casey 1995, 150). The point is that *belonging* to a corporate family, complying with its processes such as reward systems, provides a compensatory effect to the 'acutely ambivalent and conflictual self' (Casey 1995, 150). That the employee feels valued and belongs to a major organisation with the promise of career paths and salary packages helps to minimise resistance. Thus the technologies of the reward system help to maintain a corporatised self. They embody the promise of future gratification — sometimes directly connected to one's *image:*

> the sign form has appropriated labour in order to empty it ... and to absorb it in the process of its own reproduction. (Baudrillard 1988, 130)

The 'emptying' process encompasses titles, money, cars, car parking and status. These remain powerful influences in the modern workplace. The promise of future gratification; the promise of *being someone* in the hierarchy continues to count.

Being someone in the corporate-team is, however, a convenient cultural formation. It is corporate script for obtaining desired sensibilities in employees. The 'teams' are not based upon the spontaneous creation of groups of workers who wish to establish a community together. They are based on corporate work and their vulnerability indicates the fundamental importance to the corporation of reward and punishment systems.

Foucault (1988, 1977) argues that the methods of discipline and punishment used in western cultures have shifted dramatically over the past several hundred years, from ritual punishment delivered publicly by the sovereign, to an internalised, self-monitored technology of the self. Within this self-technology, individuals discipline themselves — in accordance with workplace norms. As Foucault explains, 'normalisation occurs through comparison, ranking, judging, measurement, differentiation and setting the limits in relation to the 'Norm'' (1977, 183).

Trainers' 'performance' is increasingly measured in dollars and cents terms. This 'examination', which Foucault refers to as an instrument of discipline, combines the techniques of surveillance and normalisation. Trainers' examinations take the form of a corporate 'ritualised ceremony of power which claims to establish an objective truth about the individual' (Foucault 1977, 183). Financially based instruments for assessing trainers' performance do not, however, accurately reflect the elusive yet critical aspects of teaching and helping others to learn. Read from a Foucauldian standpoint, trainers are thus subjects of (and subjected to) the disciplinary regimes of the corporation. Panoptic group norms and corporate technologies for regulation are exemplified by fancy job-titles, financially based performance reviews, participation in corporate profit-share schemes, and hyper-male culture in which the message of valuing diversity is one of the technologies of compliance.

4) The rhetoric of difference

The process of globalisation, involving the dismantling of national and trade borders accompanied by the growth of multinational companies and movement of people for work or migration purposes, is often seen to fuel a homogenisation of values, organisational cultures, languages, and work practices producing unified and integrated common cultures. Paradoxically though globalisation has, at the same time, strengthened the processes for establishing and maintaining local cultures and local differences as nation-states, regions and organisations construct boundaries and images defining their uniqueness. This illustrates the coexistence of seemingly contradictory processes:

> What does seem clear is that it is not helpful to regard the global and local as dichotomies separated in space or time: it would seem that the processes of globalisation and localisation are inextricably bound together in the current phase. (Featherstone 1995, 103)

Therefore despite the movement towards a global culture, local differences are becoming increasingly defined as workplaces compete for market shares to meet the particular needs of niche consumer groups. Servicing this shift are employees' cultural and technological knowledge and skills — a relationship well appreciated by human capital theory. Increasingly, the relationship between production and intercultural marketing involves dialogues across national and local borders.

Such dialogues pose critical questions about the degree to which the development of workplace cultures based on increasingly standardised training (and credentialling) can coexist with different cultural experiences and skills of employees. For instance, is the standardised training nomenclature actually recognising different knowledges and values? Or do they have the effect of homogenising? Do management, work and training practices realise, or conflict with, the rhetoric of valuing difference? And to what extent is corporate culture incorporated into the employees' personal identity?

As 'industry-driven' vocational education and training systems increasingly frame workplace competencies, the training and credentialling of learning outcomes become part of the technologies for developing values around cultural differences: in knowledges, experiences and identities. Yet industry competency standards, a key technology for the construction of skilled workers, prescribe singular ways of performing and templates for training that will regenerate the same ways. In the call for standardisation and benchmarking, the strict boundaries around *units of work* and *units of learning* accompanied by prescriptive performance criteria and learning outcomes render invisible the overlaps and the complex relationships that allow for different and competing workplace practices as well as the cultural knowledge that underpins worker skills.

Recognition of prior learning, heralded as one of the key conceptual shifts that acknowledge and accredit learning outside formal institutions, potentially provides the opportunity for giving space and reward for individual's diverse knowledges, experiences and skills. But when this meaning is recognised and assessed it is being framed within monocultural classifications of competence. In this way 'each (person) can only be understood in terms of sameness and conformity' (Michelson 1996).

In the rhetoric of workplace culture there is much promise of recognition of diverse experiences and knowledges. Yet contemporary corporations promote 'culture' as people sharing the same visions, *doing* common tasks and working towards pre-determined workplace standards. This is reinforced in a number of workplace practices. Increasingly, job application processes include personality tests and recruitment practices and criteria that aim to identify very specific kinds of attitudes and values — those that match the imaging and reproduction requirements of the corporate culture. Applying Foucault's (1988) theory of technologies of power, these corporate practices are associated with a certain type of domination. Each practice implies 'certain modes of training and *modification of individuals*, not only in the obvious sense of acquiring certain skills but also in the sense of acquiring certain attitudes' (1988, 18).

Furthermore communication systems and practices, motivated by the need to improve information flow, are being standardised. While the standardisation of modes and formats can assist in the giving and receiving of information, it can also limit new meanings, for example, document templates ensure particular constructions of texts. A 'standard' spoken language is also the expected in team meetings where voices that use appropriate language and communication strategies are listened to. Communication training thus tends to focus on individual language skills that empower, rather than examine the power relations within the organisation that empower some while disempowering others. Indeed, training sessions which seek the narrow promotion of 'cultural capital' resources can lead to losses of dignity and sense of self-worth.

Cultural knowledge is frequently utilised for productivity purposes. This is illustrated by the cultural knowledge of migrant employees that is often drawn upon in shaping and producing products (and services) for local or international niche markets and for communicating with multinational partners as well as the local community. However, if the value of the 'human resource' doesn't have a direct relationship with the capital product or service being developed, it has little or no place. Subsequently, individual initiatives in meetings and other decision making forums can be withdrawn as employees who no longer feel willing or confident about what they can contribute remain silent — thus diverse contributions become invisible and/or inaudible.

Much of the rhetoric around difference is about obtaining compliance with corporate objectives and production imperatives. Valuing diverse knowledges and skills contradicts the organisational culture in which pre-defined values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours (sameness) are rewarded. Training programs, rather than developing diversity and innovation, are framed by singular, compliance seeking structures and technologies.

Concluding remarks

In the post-industrial scenario, we have argued that the systematic fashioning of western workers' learning is associated with technologies of compliance. The technologies, as we have pointed out, do not only manufacture compliance, but actively create new images, cultural values, work and social expectations. Indeed, Rose (1996, 130) suggests that workers can come to identify themselves and conceive of their interests in terms of the words and images that accompany the re-fashioning of the new learning workplaces. Du Gay (1996, 53) further argues that an effect of this identification 'actively transforms meanings and realities of work', but with an effect that workers are increasingly bound into the required productive ways. Boje chillingly describes some of the implications of this so-called 'humanisation of work' (for learning) as including:

> a seamless web of instructional apparatus where we are taught to be 'politically correct' bureaucrats. The learning occurs in the minute-by-minute interactions and the spaces along the hallways, lunchrooms and e-mail networks. The iron cage of the bureaucratic teaching machine is so ubiquitous and (seemingly) benign that the prisoners of modern learning no longer see the bars, the gears, or question the learning agenda. (1994, 447)

Boje's 'bureaucratic teaching machine' can be readily linked with Foucault's ideas on the exercise of power, which is not 'a naked fact, an institutional right, nor is it a structure which holds out to be smashed: it is elaborated, transformed, organised: it endows itself with processes which are more or less adjusted to the situation' (Foucault 1982, 224). 'The situation' under scrutiny here is related to the technologies of compliance in training which systematically produce instrumental outcomes whereby 'learning' no longer requires critical distance, dialogue and critique. Here the goal of training is the conveyance of a certain type of knowledge — instrumental knowledge; that which is needed to 'fit-in' with the team and get the job done — as distinct from a questioning knowledge which may contain its own negation.

Some of our concerns about contemporary approaches to training stem from their location in a society of performativity. The drive to align training (and learning) towards enhanced production and more competitive outcomes and greater efficiencies is very powerful. We therefore wonder what can sustain trainers and adult educators more generally in the face of such power. We have revealed that contemporary training practices do not deal in self-criticism, paradox, irony or doubt, yet it appears to us that it is precisely these qualities that give substance to learning.

Our conclusions centre on this 'lack'. If conceptions of training are to be better, they will have to take seriously the contested status of knowing/knowledge and include the characteristics of self-negation, irony and doubt. This means a high degree of tolerance for unanswered questions, uncertainty, ambiguity and difference. By definition therefore, some problems will never be fully resolved, indicating new demands upon mental life. Further, more research and theoretical development is needed on the dialectical interaction between oneself and social formations; on the development of identities in and through experiences of work.

By problematising the disciplinary nature of training we have argued that training ought to be theorised to allow for different dialogues and different kinds of outcomes — within it and as a consequence of it. A better mode for training would thus include a recognition of the crisis in purpose which characterises contemporary (postmodern) society and radical analyses of corporate work/life. This approach is not intended to deny instrumental learning in organisations, but it does require an unprecedented self-reflexivity of the 'authors' of corporate training, staff development and business learning.

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Crossing borders, breaking boundaries: transformative learning in a diverse group of Jewish women

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What does it mean to be a Jewish woman today? Which hierarchies of ethnicity and class exist within the Jewish community? How do assimilation and internalised oppression affect Jewish identity? This paper describes and analyses the experiences of a diverse group of Jewish women brought together to participate in a women's film project about oppression. This Council of Jewish women, all currently living in the United States, explored what holds oppression in place from a racial/ethnic and class perspective, with the goal of finding ways to undergo personal and collective transformation. We discuss the significance of this study beyond the Jewish experience, for different contexts of formal and informal adult learning in a world increasingly challenged by the complexity of diversity.

Context setting

The Jewish council was created for a larger video project which included eight ethnic councils of women. The overall focus of the video project was on oppression. The two of us, Penny and Anna, served as co-facilitators of the Jewish council. Our role was to recruit a diverse group of Jewish women to meet several times over a three month period. The fourth meeting was filmed for the video project.

When choosing women, we were guided by two selection criteria: a diverse representation of the Jewish experience, and for no woman with a marginalised identity to be isolated. Following an extended search, we recruited nine women from diverse backgrounds: Loolwa, Sarah, Rebecca, Maya, Ellen, Janet, Jill, Esther and Varda. They were Ashkenazi (Eastern European descent), Mizrachi (indigenous Jews from Arabic countries), and Sephardic (Jews who were expelled from Spain during the inquisition and settled throughout the Ottoman Empire); different socio-economic backgrounds; varied sexual orientations; a variety of perspectives about Jewish religious, political, and social issues; immigrants, refugees, and USA born; and spanning an age range of thirty years.

During our council meetings, in preparation for the filming, we attempted to create a woman-centred environment: we met in women's homes, played Jewish music, prepared food, brought ritual objects, and shared personal stories. We created guidelines for conducting our meetings, emphasising shared leadership, safety, and acceptance of multiple realities.

Methodology

Rooted in a constructivist paradigm, our methodology is primarily narrative, employed as a 'unique epistemic structure in which the knowing arises from the telling and the telling is an integral part of the knowing'[1]. We have followed procedures recommended by Polkinghorne, (1988, 177): 'The goal of [narrative] analysis is to uncover the common themes...in the data. Analysis is carried out using hermeneutic techniques...for noting underlying patterns across examples of stories'.

Data collection and analysis.

In our combined role of researchers and facilitators, we carried out a number of activities over a nine month period. In terms of data collection, we taped one-hour open-ended interviews with each woman (including ourselves) both before the first council meeting and after the filming, three months later. The initial interviews focused on beliefs about oppression, what holds it in place, and what the healing is; the latter interviews focused on new learnings in regard to these themes, as a result of Council experiences. During this time we also co-facilitated three five-hour meetings of the Council, followed by a fourth meeting which was filmed. All council meetings and debriefing sessions were audio-taped.

After transcribing the initial interviews, we collaboratively reviewed each one, inductively allowing themes to emerge from the data. Next, we summarised each interview, focusing on the key themes from each woman and our learnings from her. For analysis, we drew on our full set of experiences, including our memories and informal conversations; however, our primary data for this study were the second set of interviews, which revealed the learnings from each woman. We discovered several common themes. Overall during this process we experienced a strong convergence of our respective opinions, interspersed with bringing fresh learning to each other. Our experience confirmed that of Elliot Mishler that "researchers undergo changes as they gather data, and the people interviewed affect those doing the interviewing." (Polkinghorne 1988, 177).

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[1] Oral Presentation, Dr. LaVera Crawley, Narrative Methods, March 5, 1997.

Findings

Many themes emerged from our data analysis and we organised them under three categories: 'The experience of oppression', which included themes of assimilation/whiteness, Ashkenazi/Mizrachi/Sephardic dynamics, and class dynamics; 'The effects of oppression', which included themes of invisibility and internalised oppression; and 'The experience of participating in the Council', which included themes of healing, mirroring, Jewish heritage, and learning environment. For the purpose of this paper, we chose to focus on themes where the most significant learning happened. The findings are told through three stories which illustrate the essence of each theme. As co-facilitators, co-inquirers, and participants, we believe our learning was increased through the interviews and personal contact with the women throughout this study. This is reflected in the choice of our stories, two of which focus on our own experiences in the Council.

Awakening from assimilation: finding her Jewish voice

Penny is a 48-year-old Ashkenazi lesbian from a middle class background. In reaction to feeling invisible as a Jewish child buried in white Christian middle class suburbs, just wanting to blend in and belong, she did not even recognise assimilation into whiteness as a significant story. She related to 'white' as of European descent, as representing the dominant institutional power structure in the USA. As an example of her internalised anti-semitism, she remembers, as an activist, marching for every cause *except* 'something around Jewishness... that was the last thing on earth I would ever march about!'

Hearing the other women's stories of deeply-rooted Jewishness, particularly Laura's, who was also Ashkenazi but grew up very unassimilated in a closely-knit working class ethnic neighbourhood on New York's Lower East Side, Penny said, 'I could just feel my heart yearning. I could see walking down that street and having everyone call your name. It was just like, oh my God, this is me'.

On film, as Penny began talking about her unconscious attempt to pass as white, her voice shook with the emerging awareness of what she had lost: 'They took away my wail. They changed my song from a minor to a major key!' When she qualified this, saying she had benefited from 'white' privilege because she was able to have her voice, Loolwa countered, 'Not your *Jewish* voice'. 'That blew my mind', Penny reflected. 'When she said that, I suddenly understood how I'd let part of myself be split off'. Laura added to her understanding, 'There is a part of yourself that you never got and that is what you are searching for'.

This learning awakened in Penny new awareness about her internalised anti-semitism. 'When you asked me about my terror, all of a sudden I thought of my New York relatives. It felt like all these worms crawling on my skin. I desperately tried brushing them off, feeling humiliation and grief, feeling layers of disgust for the 'loud pushy Jewish relatives' — feeling how I was constructed to hate my own Jewishness'.

In her interview four months earlier, at the beginning of the project, Penny said 'I'm very clear in this culture about being white, because of having white skin privilege'. Days after the filming, Penny reflected, '*Before*, I realise I was looking at my Jewishness through my whiteness. *Now*, I am beginning to look at my whiteness through my Jewishness. I have been treated as white and benefited from white privilege; I have also been hurt and excluded by it. Now I am seeing myself more as light-skinned than white-skinned. My story *is* important. My experience was *different* than white non-Jews. I now understand what Sarah meant when she said she was afraid that assimilation would finish what Hitler didn't — and that assimilated Jews didn't even understand that'.

Acknowledging Ashkenazi-centrism: two steps forward, one step back

The existing inter-ethnic discrimination which exists within the Jewish community in Israel, in the United States, and perhaps internationally, was voiced from the first interview by the Sephardic and Mizrachi women. The Ashkenazi women spoke much less about this topic. Esther, an Egyptian /Iraqi Jew, who grew up stateless in Japan, spoke of her 'invisibility' in the United States as a Mizrachi Jew. 'Then I came here, and it was, so you're what? Egyptian, Iraqi? Then you can't be Jewish. You don't know bagels and cream cheese? You can't be Jewish'.

Varda, an Iraqi born, Israeli raised Mizrachi Jew, spoke about growing up in Israel and feeling she had abilities, but ... no place for her to be herself; she felt life was hopeless and futureless. 'We [were] new immigrants from projects and it was in the air ... nothing that I heard directly from anyone, but ... we lived in a society of Ashkenazim and they are better ... they run the system, and they can make decisions, and we were almost problems for them because we came from a different system, and we didn't know how to manage our lives'.

Having grown up in Israel, Anna, an Ashkenazi Jew, was acutely aware of the existing institutionalised domination of Ashkenazi Jews, and the deeply embedded Ashkenazi discrimination towards Sephardic, Mizrachi and Ethiopian Jews. However, she was not aware of the subtle ways in which this power dynamics plays out, and the extent to which it exists in the United States. As a result of interviewing the Mizrachi and Sephardic women and hearing their stories, Anna's learning expanded as she began realising, 'In tiny ways, how Ashkenazicentric the Jewish experience is both for people who are non-Jewish, as well as for Ashkenazi people like myself'.

For example, during the council meetings she learned that the challah, the ritual braided bread eaten every Shabbat evening, which for Anna symbolises the Sabbath, is only used by Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews. Mizrachi Jews use pita bread as their ritual bread. All her life she had thought the challah was a central Jewish symbol, only to realise that it was for her, but not for all Jews. She had been taught that only the challah was a Jewish symbol for Shabbat, leaving out the Mizrachi experience.

Anna remembered her awakening during the council meetings to her dehumanising participation in Ashkenazi domination towards Mizrachi and Sephardic people in Israel. 'I have ripped them off of their esteem, in my devaluing their music and anything that they do ... that they are 'primitive' ... all the messages ... It was taught to me, but then ... I perpetuated it'. During the council meeting which was filmed, Anna chose not to speak to this dehumanisation or to its effects on Ashkenazi people, including herself. She feared that airing Jewish internal 'dirty laundry' to a non-Jewish audience would perpetuate the justification of anti-semitism and Jew hating.

Although she explained this in the Council meeting, she learned later how disappointed Varda had been by this decision. 'You talked a lot before, but I didn't feel that you talked enough during the movie about yourself and the Sephardic, Mizrachi, and Ashkenazi. You sort of clammed up... I wished you could do more'. In hearing this Anna felt great grief at what she had done, and validated Varda's experience. Anna's greatest challenge as she struggles with taking two steps forward and one step back, is in speaking her truth, hoping she will not be ostracised by the Ashkenazi community, while building alliances with Mizrachi and Sephardic people. In her first interview, Esther said something which became the deepest learning for the Ashkenazi women in the Council: 'We are really multi-cultural ... and the healing is in getting that we are'.

Naming the invisible: class dynamics in the Council

In spite of our intention to have class diversity well-represented on the Council, when one of the working class women dropped out for personal reasons, only two women were left with significant working class experiences. In the first interview, when we asked about experiences of class dynamics within the Jewish community, we were surprised by the emotional responses. Esther, who has a mixed class background, said, 'If you're not middle class, you don't exist in the Jewish community'. Sarah, from a working class background, answered, 'How much time do you have? ... It's so big an issue and it's never discussed ... it's like one word: nice middle-class Jewish family. Is there any other kind? And ... from that you should infer that it's Ashkenazi, but that need not even be spoken'.

In contrast, the middle and upper class women were relatively unaware of class dynamics in the Jewish community. In the second interview, when asked if they had developed new learning around class from participating in the Council, they had nothing to report.

The two working class women in the Council were Rebecca, unassimilated Ashkenazi from Manhattan's Lower East Side; and Sarah, Sephardic, from Brooklyn. During the second interview they both struggled to hold back their tears while talking about class. Rebecca spoke to the fact that Penny and Anna are from middle and affluent backgrounds: 'It is really hard for working class and middle class people to have a conversation... everything in me and everything in my upbringing has told me not to have this conversation... it goes against my own survival mechanism'.

After Penny shared her fear about her middle class New York relatives being 'too Jewish' — so they felt like worms crawling inside her, reflecting her internalised anti-semitism — Rebecca experienced her own transformative learning. 'I feel like the thing that you got taught to despise in yourself is me'. Penny's experience reminded Rebecca of the message her middle class relatives gave her working class family while she was growing up. 'When you said that thing about the worms, and I thought, God, that is so much how we were made to feel, like...we were worms crawling around in the dirt...We were given the message that we were too Jewish, too dark, too dirty, too second class'. She said Penny spoke to how her soul had been crushed by the internal self hatred of other Jewish people: 'In hearing you acknowledge such a deep truth in yourself, I felt as if many of the things that I perceived as a child were validated'.

For both Rebecca and Sarah, class dynamics stood out in all the council meeting in ways that were invisible to the middle and upper class women. On the receiving end of these behaviours, Sarah explained, 'It is an amorphous thing floating around when I am around somebody ... There is ... a lack of sensitivity around class, or I wouldn't be feeling it from the other person'. Rebecca and Sarah expressed their realisation that some old wounds never go away.

As co-facilitators and co-inquirers, we believe we would not have uncovered this theme without the interviews with Rebecca and Sarah, because of how embedded we both are in our own class privilege. Without having had similar conversations with these women, the other women on the Council did not undergo any new learning around class dynamics.

Significance

'The Jewish Council has been a crucible for learning ... opening my heart on deeper and deeper levels', Rebecca said, voicing the experience of the women in the Council. Loolwa added, 'It felt like creating a family'. Contributing factors towards all the women's learning included sharing diverse personal stories and developing capacities to hold different perspectives; validation of feeling significantly represented as a marginalised group; connecting with facilitators through personal interviews; and sense of group safety, support and caring. As co-inquirers and co-facilitators, we believe our personal learning was significantly enhanced through the two interviews with each woman, and numerous one-on-one conversations. We feel that this also helped create intimacy with each woman, contributing to the learning environment.

Why is this study important? It speaks to the necessity of significant representation by marginalised groups in *multicultural settings*, as a critical component of transformative learning environments. This does not negate the value of learning in homogenous groups who focus on studying themselves. Speaking to the importance of a balance of representation, this can best be illustrated through Loolwa's dramatic experience in the Council.

Loolwa is a 27-year-old biracial Iraqi-American Jew who is an outspoken educator on Jewish multiculturalism. She felt significantly mirrored as a Mizrachi Jew, because there were three other Mizrachi or Sephardic women in a Council of eleven: 'I saw all of myself reflected back ... It was so important to me that there were other Mizrachi and Sephardic women there because ... (for example) a couple of people were talking about Jewish (Ashkenazi) intellectualism and ... I was not relating at all and it was ... the first time in my life that I didn't just sit there dealing with it internally, but I got to spin around and say to Varda and Sarah, 'Do you guys relate to this at all?' And they were like, 'No'. ... Like I don't have to fit myself into this other thing ... I can just check in with my sisters... and see what their experience is, and that was just so validating of my experience'.

She continued, 'Everything about me was seen and heard and appreciated and loved ... That is the first experience that I have had of that ...' As a result of feeling mirrored by other Mizrachi and Sephardic women, she could 'Put my arms down, my weapons down ... That is what it is about, like hear me and I will hear you'.

Contrasted to this were Rebecca and Sarah's experience as the only working class women in the Council. Despite the fact that all of us in the group cherished our common bond as Jewish women, neither Rebecca nor Sarah felt safe enough to raise issues of class entitlement they felt from some of the Council members. Rebecca reflects, 'There are ... middle class dynamics that I felt...and it got overwhelming ... I don't know if I could do the (class) work ... because there ... is like one other working class woman on the Council. I feel like it ... needed a balance'. *We believe that inadequate representation by marginalised groups in multi-class settings silences the marginalised voices, consequently depriving the entire group of significant learning.*

This ties in to our belief as inquirers of the importance of 'crossing borders and breaking boundaries' by creating learning environments in multicultural/multi-class/multi-gender settings — beginning in our Jewish communities — which support balanced representation by marginalised groups. This is a critical step towards restructuring the power dynamic worldwide, into one reflecting values of equity, social justice, sustainability, and empowerment.

What does this mean for us as organisers, activists, academics? It is imperative that as we create groups, we remain conscious of inherent social and institutional power dynamics and work to create a balance of representation by diverse populations. This involves working collaboratively with marginalised groups from a project's inception, as opposed to, for example, starting a group as Ashkenazi, and then once the agenda is set, 'outreaching' to bring Mizrachi in. Ideally, in our Council, one facilitator would have been Mizrachi or Sephardic, reflecting balance, or ethnic parity, in the group's leadership and membership. This is part of what it means to shift the imbalance of power in the world.

It is also important that we deeply commit to these values of significant representation, because we understand *how essential diverse perspectives are in creating a learning environment.* If we have not embodied these beliefs, then when we are under pressure from lack of time or resources, we will sacrifice this goal for short-term benefits, thus completely undermining our vision. Jewish tradition values action as highly as contemplation, and it is crucial that we compassionately 'walk our talk'.

We are also speaking here about alliance-building across ethnicity, class and gender differences — using our power and vision to collaborate with others who have less, and more, institutional power, to create relationships of authenticity, honesty and trust, in which we can speak the unspeakable, listen openly, reflect deeply, and take responsible compassionate action towards justice and empowerment. Hearing diverse personal stories is a powerful tool in seeing shared humanness and complexity towards building alliance.

Ultimately, our vision stems from the concept of *Tikkun Olam*, the repair and healing of the world: a core ethical value in Jewish tradition, guiding our inquiry and our lives. As we reflect on our study, the voices of ancient Jewish teachings echo in our ears:

> It is not mine to complete The Work in my lifetime; neither must I refuse to do my unique part.
>
> Rabbi Tarphon, *The Talmud*

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What's the purpose of adult education? What professionals think and the problems of international comparative studies in adult education

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During the last half of this century, the nature of adult education has changed from self-help and the provision of liberal adult education for the minority to a general expectation that it will be provided for the many, based primarily upon the demands of their work. That the education of adults changes with the needs of work suggests that it is an epiphenomenon to the development of global capitalism. As capitalism spreads throughout the world, it carries with it a considerable degree of standardisation (Ritzer 1993), accompanied by dynamic forces in the opposite direction resulting in social fragmentation (Bauman 1995). Adult education is clearly a significant player in this process: the education of adults has grown and developed as a result of the introduction of more sophisticated technology in the world of work, but learning individuates (Jarvis 1992).

To what extent do these tensions between the standardisation and fragmentation of the spread of global capitalism impinge on adult educators' understanding of the purposes of their profession? We shall focus on three questions:

1. What do adult educators think are the purposes of adult education today?
2. Is there consonance in their viewpoints within Britain and between Britain and Europe as a whole?
3. How far are these attitudes consistent with current national and European government policies and with theories about the purposes of adult education?

In order to seek answers, we have used data from a major European Commission funded comparative study, 'The Future of Adult Education and Lifelong Learning in Europe', 1993-95 (called 'Eurodelphi'). Initially, we shall discuss globalisation and look briefly at the way adult education has changed over the past century. We shall then report the data and discuss the findings. Finally, we shall suggest conclusions in the context of several problems of international comparative studies in adult education.

Globalisation

Globalisation is the process by which the world is compressed and its peoples become more conscious of the world as a whole (Robertson 1992, 8). This process of compression has developed from the twin forces of advanced capitalism generating a world market and information technology making almost instantaneous communication possible throughout this market. Growing standardisation results, especially since the primary emphasis of globalisation is the production of a world market and an international division of labour. This process, Ritzer (1993) argues, produces standardisation throughout the world, epitomised by the universality of McDonalds and its standardised procedures.

However, a counter-force results in individualisation. Seeming to lose themselves in this complex world, individuals seek to rediscover their own identities. The process of learning also individualises. Indeed, individualisation itself becomes institutionalised:

The liberated individuals become dependent on the labour market and *because of that*, dependent on education, consumption, welfare state regulations and support, traffic planning, consumer supplies, and on possibilities and fashions in medical, psychological and pedagogical counselling and care (Beck 1992, 130).

For Beck, education and guidance are part of the institutions in and through which individuals find their place in this global society. They need education since it provides them with the knowledge necessary for the labour market, but it also becomes necessary as a constituent element for people's biography.

The purposes of adult education

Wiltshire (1956/1976, 31-32) characterised the great tradition of adult education as:

- committed to humane or liberal studies
- fostering learning for learning's sake
- of a non-vocational nature
- combining equality of educational opportunity with optimism that adults can be educated
- using the Socratic method.

By 1956, however, Wiltshire (1956/1976, 32-33) was forced to ask, 'Is it a dying tradition?' He concluded that, even if it were not a dying tradition, it was certainly no longer a very significant one.

Since then, the education of adults in the UK has been characterised by a massive influx of adults into further and higher education and by increases in adult vocational training and continuing professional development. We are also seeing a remarkable growth of liberal adult education in the third age, when people have time for their lives rather than their work.

It is within this framework that we want to ask what purposes specialist adult educators see in adult education. Our research data comprise selected Eurodelphi results. This project began in Belgium when Leirman et al. (Leirman 1995) conducted a Delphi study among five groups of adult educators: vocational educators of young adults, vocational educators of adults, trainers in commerce and industry, adult basic educators, and adult general educators. This study elicited professionals' views across a wide range of issues so that it might influence government policy.

The project was then partially replicated throughout Europe. Rather than repeating the whole Delphi process, Eurodelphi used a questionnaire survey, based on the Belgian project, followed by conferences with the respondents. This paper reports and discusses the findings of two of these surveys — England/Wales and Scotland — within the context of the whole project. The results for England and Wales are combined because there were too few respondents from Wales to justify analysing the data separately. Unless otherwise specified, all data from the overall European project are drawn from Leirman (1995), for England/Wales from Dubelaar and Jarvis (1995), and for Scotland from Gerver and Owen (1995).

The research background

The relevant aims of Eurodelphi were:

> To conduct a comparative Delphi-type study, involving selected samples of experts ... in 16 European countries, regarding their understanding of
>
> - adults' learning needs in terms of issues and challenges confronting them
> - the desired and perceived contribution of the education of adults ...

Most of our data derive from analysis of four of the 34 questions used to address these aims.

Overall, 1745 respondents from 16 countries and regions replied to the questionnaires administered initially in Belgium and in the rest of Europe in 1994. Of these respondents, 83 were from Scotland and 111 from England/ Wales. The others were drawn from all countries of the 1992 European Community (except Luxembourg), Catalonia, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.

Respondents appear to be well qualified to comment on the education of adults. European respondents view themselves as educators (83%), policy makers (71%), researchers (32%) and commentators (24%); 44% see themselves in multiple roles. In England/ Wales the proportion of policy makers (91%) is higher than that of educators (56%), and the researchers (29%) are fewer than the commentators (42%). In Scotland, 61% are policy makers, 55% educators, 40% commentators and 23% researchers. Most hold full time posts in the education of adults (67% in Europe and Scotland; 89% in England/ Wales); the rest occupy voluntary and/or part time posts.

Respondents also cover five main fields of educational activity, typically working in more than one sector. Europeans' involvement comprises vocational training for adults (54%), general adult education (52%), adult basic education (39%), vocational education for young people (34%), and training within industry (31%); 43% are involved in education in general. Respondents' involvement in Scotland and England/Wales is slightly higher, with more in England/Wales (50%) and fewer Scots (27%) involved in training within industry.

Perceptions of purpose

Adults' problems

The first set of Eurodelphi questions about purposes covered the extent to which adults experience certain problems in their lives and how far adult education can help to solve these problems. Respondents were asked to rate their answers on a scale from one to seven.

A detailed breakdown of responses in Europe (E), England/Wales (E/W), and Scotland (S) appears in Table 1.

There is broad agreement about the severity of problems. Respondents in Scotland rate adults' problems (4.75) as slightly more severe than respondents in England/Wales (4.61) and in Europe (4.58). Of the 22 problems, five in Britain rate five or more on the seven point scale: unemployment, organisation of labour, distrust of politics, interpersonal problems, and time and stress. In Europe, only three problems rate five or more: organisation of labour, unemployment, and time and stress.

The largest differences between the British and European responses appear in the higher British rating of unemployment, poverty, access to information, and distrust of politics. In Britain, the power of global capitalism has run more rampant than in the rest of the European Union for the past eighteen years; Britain is therefore viewed as more economically divided and politically uneasy than the rest of Europe.

Fewer and smaller differences arise between perceptions within Britain. On all items where there are differences (except environmental pollution), Scotland is perceived as having more severe problems than England/Wales. The difference is particularly pronounced on two problems — complexity of society and inadequate housing. Problems related to personal identity, the high degree of specialisation and poverty are also seen as worse in Scotland.

Can adult education help to solve these problems?

Adult education's most important contribution is perceived as continuing professional development: providing information about new technologies, dis-

Table 1: Problems experienced by adults

	E	E/W	S
Organisation of labour	5.2	5.3	5.5
Unemployment	5.0	5.4	5.6
Time and stress	5.0	5.0	5.2
Interpersonal problems	4.9	5.1	5.1
Insufficient professional knowledge	4.9	4.9	4.8
Complexity of society	4.9	4.5	4.8
Lack of meaning	4.8	4.7	4.8
Distrust of politics	4.8	5.1	5.1
Inaccessibility of new technologies	4.7	4.7	4.9
Environmental pollution	4.6	4.6	4.3
High specialisation	4.6	4.5	4.8
Health	4.6	4.6	4.6
Other forms of social inequality	4.6	4.7	4.9
Personal identity	4.5	4.3	4.6
Access to information	4.5	4.8	4.9
Poverty	4.4	4.6	4.9
Inadequate housing	4.3	4.2	4.6
Increasing superficiality	4.3	4.4	4.5
Lack of democracy	4.1	4.3	4.3
Expansion of scale	4.3	4.0	4.4
Population changes	4.0	3.9	3.8
Physical mobility	3.9	3.9	3.9

Table 2: Adult education's contribution towards solving problems

	E	E/W	S
Organisation of labour	4.9	4.5	4.4
Unemployment	4.3	4.5	4.3
Time and stress	4.3	4.4	4.4
Interpersonal problems	4.7	4.5	4.5
Insufficient professional knowledge	5.6	5.7	5.7
Complexity of society	4.7	4.5	4.6
Lack of meaning	4.6	4.7	4.6
Distrust of politics	4.2	4.8	4.8
Inaccessibility of new technologies	5.1	5.4	5.6
Environmental pollution	4.4	3.8	4.0
High specialisation	4.7	4.6	4.7
Health	4.3	4.7	4.6
Other forms of social inequality	3.8	3.9	4.2
Personal identity	4.8	4.6	4.9
Access to information	5.0	4.9	5.4
Poverty	3.2	3.4	3.7
Inadequate housing	2.5	2.2	2.6
Increasing superficiality	4.0	3.9	3.9
Lack of democracy	4.4	4.1	4.2
Expansion of scale	4.4	3.8	4.1
Population changes	3.7	3.6	3.7
Physical mobility	3.1	3.2	3.1

seminating professional knowledge and, in Scotland and Europe, accessing information. In helping with the five most important British problems, however, adult education's contribution in Britain and Europe is perceived as considerably less than the severity of the problem requires, with two notable exceptions. Firstly, there appears to be much greater faith in Britain than in Europe in the ability of adult education to help to resolve distrust of politics; the outcome of the recent General Election provides a gloss here! Secondly, Europe relies more than Britain on adult education's helping with the organisation of labour; Britain's largely unregulated capitalism contrasts with the more stringent requirements elsewhere in Europe.

In general, in their beliefs that adult education could contribute towards solving adults' problems, English/Welsh and Scottish respondents are more like one another than like their European counterparts. Nevertheless, Scottish educators do perceive a more substantial contribution than English/Welsh in access to information and housing. In two areas of social justice — social inequality and poverty — Scots also perceive a higher contribution than the English/Welsh. The same difference appears in a fundamental task of liberal adult education, personal identity.

Nevertheless, there is broad European and British agreement about how far adult education can contribute towards solving problems. The average differences amongst educators are small; half the problems have a gap of 0.2 or less. Agreement is especially marked in solving problems related to global trends (complexity of society, time and stress, population changes, superficiality) and personal development (lack of meaning, interpersonal problems, personal identity). The larger differences occur on issues of social justice within nation states — social inequality, access to information, poverty, distrust of politics, organisation of labour, and adequate housing. Here, Europeans tend to be more pessimistic than their British counterparts (but they also tend to see these problems as less severe).

Adult education objectives

The other main questions about purposes asked educators to rate (on a seven point scale) the importance of 11 major objectives of adult education and to indicate the degree of time and effort invested in each objective by their own field of practice. Table 3 reports the results:

Table 3: The importance of adult education goals

	E	E/W	S
Communicate	5.9	6.2	6.1
Learn how to learn	5.9	6.0	6.0
Function as a citizen	5.8	5.5	5.7
Develop one's personality	5.8	5.3	5.3
Relate to others	5.6	5.4	5.4
Give meaning to life	5.4	4.8	5.1
Improve employability	5.3	5.7	5.9
Maintain health and safety	5.1	5.1	5.0
Take part in culture	5.0	5.1	5.0
Manage home and family	4.9	4.7	4.8
Use maths and computing	4.6	4.9	4.7

As the table shows, respondents rate highly all the goals of adult education, particularly emphasising the two fundamental skills of communicating and learning how to learn and giving meaning to life. The wide range of the five goals rating above 5.5 in Europe also encompasses social purpose and self development; vocationally relevant objectives such as improving employability, while important, are rated lower in Europe than in Britain. There is also noticeably less British emphasis on developing one's personality and giving meaning to life.

But does adult education actually try to implement these goals? Table 4 shows how investment in the objectives generally fails to match their importance.

The same pattern as in importance appears in perceived investment. As well as communicating, improving employability is more highly rated in Britain. Investment in giving meaning to life and managing home and family is less in Britain, especially in England/Wales. From this evidence, it appears as if the process of vocationalising adult education has moved further in Britain than elsewhere in Europe. The British invest more in the vocationally relevant goals of adult education than Europeans do, and less in non-vocational objectives.

Within Britain, only one objective shows a difference of more than 0.2 points: the Scots rate giving meaning to life as more important than their English/Welsh counterparts. However, the Scots seem to invest more across a wide range of goals than their English/Welsh counterparts, especially in functioning as a citizen, giving meaning to life and using maths and computing; only in the area of maintaining health and safety do they fall short of

Table 4: Investment in adult education goals

	E	E/W	S
Communicate	5.0	5.4	5.6
Learn how to learn	4.6	5.1	4.9
Function as a citizen	4.3	3.8	4.3
Develop one's personality	4.5	4.3	4.3
Relate to others	4.6	4.6	4.6
Give meaning to life	4.1	3.6	3.9
Improve employability	4.3	5.3	5.2
Maintain health and safety	3.8	4.2	3.9
Take part in culture	3.8	4.1	4.0
Manage home and family	3.3	3.0	3.1
Use maths and computing	4.0	4.1	4.5

English/Welsh standards.

Clusters of purposes

How well do these findings fit into current concepts of the purposes of adult education? The 1996 UACE annual conference identified the three main strands of purpose in continuing education as economic/vocational, social and personal (Zukas 1996, iii). The Eurodelphi objectives fit well into such a framework: functioning as a citizen and managing home and family are sub sets of social purpose; developing one's personality, giving meaning to life and taking part in culture fit into personal development; and improving employability and using maths and computing are economic/vocational objectives. The other objectives — communicating, learning how to learn, relating to others, and health and safety — could be seen as fundamental conditions for attaining all three purposes identified by UACE.

Leirman's factor analyses of the overall European data about objectives confirms the general thrust of this analysis, with minor variations. He identifies three clusters of objectives:

Table 5: The importance of adult education goals: factors and means

Factor	Means on importance scale
Personal and cultural well being	5.28
communicative and social skills	5.84
Labour and technology skills	4.98

The mean for the development of social and communicative skills is exceptionally high, supporting our argument about the fundamental importance of such skills. Even more importantly, all three clusters of goals rate highly on the seven point scale. There thus appears to be substantial agreement both about the purposes of adult education and their importance amongst adult educators Britain and Europe. The demands of both individual personal development and the labour market are fully asserted, but they are mediated by social purpose.

Problems with international comparative studies in adult education

Comparative projects and findings such as Eurodelphi invariably contain substantial problems of conceptualisation, methodology and interpretation. We shall briefly note major problems with comparative studies in general and this one in particular before considering the overall significance of Eurodelphi.

Firstly, because the complex forms of education for adults interact with every aspect of society, it is essential to establish a preliminary common understanding and cross-country comparisons of economic, political and social systems before beginning comparisons of education. Financial and time constraints mean that multi-country comparative studies such as Eurodelphi have an almost impossible hurdle to leap before they begin.

Secondly, there are serious linguistic and conceptual problems in comparative studies across multi-lingual Europe. In Eurodelphi the words 'adult education' do not mean the same in each country or to educators within any one country; even within Britain, Eurodelphi respondents' definitions of adult education vary dramatically. Conceptually, as the UK 1996 Research Assessment Exercise demonstrated, research into the education of adults is increasingly seen within post compulsory education and training, and its boundaries thus become even more problematic.

Thirdly, researchers agree that the methodology of comparative studies in the education of adults remains underdeveloped (Titmus 1989; Hake and Marriott 1992; Hake 1994; Rubenson 1995). The Eurodelphi use of an adapted Delphi method for policy development was overshadowed by the fact that the validity of Delphi in international research has not yet been firmly established. The use of a prior Belgian questionnaire also meant that the main emphases of Eurodelphi were necessarily shaped by the perceptions, experience, and terminology of Belgian adult educators.

Conclusions

In short, Eurodelphi is not a model comparative study! Nevertheless, it provides the first European picture of what specialists think about adult education in their own countries, including its purposes. It demonstrates the fluidity of movement of contemporary adult educators among different fields and roles. It confirms the complexity and interaction of the purposes of adult education as viewed by specialists. It establishes a framework of purposes which sets the skills of learning at the heart of the objectives of adult education. It clearly illustrates tensions within and between the countries of Europe. But it also shows that educators committed to vocational goals remain deeply concerned with issues of social justice and personal development.

Eurodelphi also offers an important example of contemporary adult education research which lies outwith the current main trends of applied research into work related education and training (Hake 1994). Unlike most adult education research, Eurodelphi attempts to consider what Rubenson (1995, 12) sees as 'fundamental issues of a learning nature within society'. Already, other researchers are following in the directions in which Eurodelphi has broken the boundaries: the current comparison by Field and Schuller (1995) of participation in adult education in Scotland and Northern Ireland uses a reiterative methodology analogous to the Delphi, while Field (1997) has further investigated the attitudes of adult educators about European issues.

In the light of the achievements and difficulties in comparative studies which Eurodelphi illustrates, it may be that in future, rather than comparing adult education across European boundaries, we might instead compare specific types of adult education, such as continuing professional development, vocational education or adult basic education, by economic sectors across countries in Europe. It may also be that comparisons of non-vocational or general adult education will in future be based on an analysis of post-work phenomena. All new comparisons, however, will have to move beyond the global capitalist model of the standardisation of the labour market and the fragmentation of individualism to take account of social purpose.

The purposes of adult education depicted in Britain and Europe through Eurodelphi are distant from those of Wiltshire's great tradition. But the British picture remains encouragingly similar to that of our European colleagues, depicting both commitment to vocational goals and widespread support for personal and social purposes, with an overarching concern for the fundamental skills of communication and learning. The challenge now is to construct new conceptual models of purposes for the new century, to include the fluid interaction amongst vocational, social, self development and learning goals identified in Eurodelphi.

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Learning trajectories: predicting patterns of adult education and training

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The notion of a post-compulsory learning trajectory as used in this study may be summarised as a quasi-determinist view of an individual's participation in formal education and training after initial schooling, based on the idea that the autonomy of the individual is bounded to a large extent by external structural and social constraints mediated by an internalised view of the value and availability of opportunities. This leads to discernible regularities in the patterns of participation between individuals within a group, and to inertia and therefore predictability within the pattern for each individual. A trajectory therefore minimises the impact of individual choices and decision-making in explaining the operation of a market for education (Rees and others 1997). However, it also allows a role for weaker determinants not springing from the socialisation of the individual, such as an imperfect knowledge of changes in provision (Gorard and others 1997a). In this way, although the actual opportunities for learning available to each individual may be important in determining participation, it may be that the individual's social construction of those opportunities, as seen through the filter of culturally permissible variations within a pre-set trajectory, are more important still. If the trajectory that one starts out on at age 16 is largely determined by social background, its path remains quasi-determinist over time because of these attitudinal constraints, reinforced by structural barriers such as lack of entry qualifications, time, and transport (Gorard and others 1997b). The individual's attitude to learning, their learning identity, is based on their view of the value of learning, stemming from their educational experiences, not simply of success or failure, but of an entire educational culture (Fevre and others 1997). It is this that affects their later evaluation not merely of what is available but also what is appropriate.

Trajectories have been used previously to define characteristic patterns of movement through an economic system (Penn and others 1990) or the impact of training on employment (Main and Shelly 1990, Dolton and others 1994, DfEe 1995). The notion of an educational trajectory has been also useful in describing patterns of variance in short-term transition, such as that from primary to secondary school (for example, Halsey and others 1980), or from school to work (for example, Bynner 1992). However, in both of these cases the trajectories are relatively short, whereas in the present study the collection of detailed life histories from respondents as old as 65 has allowed the creation of trajectories covering the entire range of adult participation in education and training.

Potential determinants

Despite the decision to base the trajectories on empirical data, reinforcing its primacy over mere theory by allowing the data to speak first (Gorard 1997b), it was still useful to consider in advance the kinds of data patterns that might be observed in the study, to use the results of previous attempts to model trajectories of one kind or another, and so begin to create a framework for analysis, as well as assist in the development of pertinent questions for the survey and interview instruments. The adult trajectories for each individual start at the UK compulsory school leaving age. This is a critical moment as the course of each person's future career may be determined at that point (Scottish Office 1991). Their background characteristics and experience of education so far may play a large role in making the decision. The system is to a large extent selective, and it is generally those who have done well at school who will continue in full-time education (Smithers and Robinson 1991). Other potential determinants such as initial education, family background, gender, and employment are discussed in Gorard (and others 1997c). At a very simple level, an individual's participation in education or training requires only two things — availability of a suitable opportunity and the motivation to be involved. However, neither is as straightforward as it appears at first sight.

Opportunities change over time because social mores, national policies, expenditure by government and employers, and the economy change. In addition, as the actual opportunities change so must each person's perception of them, but the two may not be contemporaneous. Those who are more 'alert' may be aware of a wider range of possibilities (Willms and Echols 1992), and even those who realise that a change has taken place may evaluate it in terms of obsolete criteria, such as when parents use knowledge of their own schooling to decide on a new school for their child at age 11 (Gorard 1997c), or when Training Credits are confused with the prior Youth Training Scheme (Hodkinson and others 1996). Devising a new educational scheme or policy cannot by itself transform patterns of participation, in the form of widening as well as merely increasing access, or reducing inequality and social stratification (NIACE 1994). Such changes also require consideration of the barriers that people face and their motivation to overcome them in order to take part. For the government, one of the advantages of this may be that it appears to shift the responsibility for non-participation to the individual, whereas there are many indications that opportunities are only relevant within a framework provided by an individual's social background and previous experiences.

Motivation can be provided by compulsion, as with initial schooling and many examples of employer-based training. It can come from peer and family influence and can be expressed in terms of financial cost/benefit, careership or even intrinsic interest. It might be affected by previous educational experiences. Different kinds of motivation may be used by different people, and these may be susceptible to patterns of influence in terms of gender, ethnicity, and social class background. To some extent, the learning trajectory of each person may therefore begin even before birth. The education and occupation of parents and siblings, and their financial position could be significant in determining the learning options seen as realistic by each individual (the ACACE survey in Sargant 1996 for example). Since educational choices have long-term effects, those made in youth under the influence of family may be the most significant. In the same way that Gambetta (1987) asked why working-class children let themselves get working-class jobs, it is possible to ask why educational profiles appear to be handed down over generations.

Although participation and non-participation in learning may be caused by a complex combination of factors, it may be that the majority of these are related to the motivation to learn. Such a disposition may be the most relevant determinant, and yet the most underestimated by survey methodology (Harrison 1993). Structural constraints are key issues in educational decisions, yet within these there may be more than one feasible option for the individual (Gambetta 1987). Since post-16 learners are overwhelmingly voluntary (Edwards and others 1993), there are in most cases at least two possibilities — to participate or not. Unfortunately, many people may feel that once school is over, education is over and that 'real life' is something else (Lowe 1970). In this respect, the disaffected students are also by deterred by the compensatory nature of much adult education aimed at them. Why should a second chance be any better than the first? Such courses are not really about continuing education but about starting again (Squires 1993) and perhaps doing it 'right' this time. This is compounded by the internalisation of failure, and by the sometimes boring nature of some academic courses stemming from their irrelevance for most student's lives. For those already disaffected from education, providing even higher loans and grants may not be sufficient to attract them (Coffield 1996). This is one reason why substantive adult learning is predominantly done by those who are already qualified. Individual help and policy initiatives, however well-designed, may not overcome the psychological barriers to learning described in Gorard and others (1997b). A high proportion of adult non-participants are seemingly beyond all attempts at motivation (Titmus 1994). There is a need to improve social conditions and decrease the inequality of access to resources on a wider scale (Hodkinson and others 1996), perhaps in the form of equal opportunities programmes (Edwards and others 1993), or more likely by utilising and building upon those elements of a post-war learning society in South Wales identified by Gorard (1997d).

Stability

Normative analyses suggest clear and fairly rigid patterns for the determinants of post-compulsory training and to some extent this may be a valid picture. Behaviour is usually inertial (for example, Dale and Davies 1994, Dolton and others 1994). Prior choices may constrain future ones, and the stress of cognitive dissonance encourages consistency for individuals. Behaviour is often either state dependent, as it is consumer choice, since some people cherish stability, or time dependent, since the number of changes, such as moving house that someone can reasonably undertake is limited.

However, it would be absurd to ignore the possible effects of personal events playing a major part in determining the future for each individual. People can and do break out. Studies suggest that where people break out it may be the result of a crisis such as redundancy, illness, divorce, or a death (Taylor and Spencer 1994). Even pregnancy and childbirth, which obviously have high impact especially for women, may be seen in the same way as crises such as domestic violence (Schratz 1996). They lead to strategies for coping which may involve learning, perhaps about the nature and causes of the incident, or to therapeutic opportunities, such as meeting new friends through adult education classes. Some people may simply look at their lives anew and realise that their immature choices are changeable, that they have alternatives. Most adults are aware that vocational and other educational opportunities exist (Hand and others 1994), but this knowledge only becomes salient if a change in their lives leads them to see training as a helpful option. A sudden change in their life can lead to a need which leads to a cost-benefit analysis of training. *Force majeure* can then short cut the decision-making process to start or stop a training episode (Hand and others 1994). Critical incidents can therefore influence and stimulate learning according to this account (Schratz 1996). They disturb individual life histories and can lead to unintentional learning. This interest in learning may be apparent early in an individual's biography but having not been satisfied initially, perhaps due to marriage or migration, is only later converted to concrete interest after an incubation period.

Even under pressure though, many people retain their inertia, so that most unemployed people look for jobs in the same occupation as their previous one, despite the fact that it has led to unemployment (Mid Glamorgan TEC 1996). Similarly most people look for work in the same area as the one they live in, which may also be the only one in which they have been unemployed. Crises, perhaps in combination might lead to coping strategies but equally may lead to feelings of resignation (Schratz 1996), while whatever happens at the micro-level in terms of patterns of educational decisions, it seems to lead to neat overall patterns of cultural reproduction (Gambetta 1987). The irony is that choice for the individual can lead to inertia. Overall, the evidence suggests that patterns of participation in education will be strong and hard to break. The 'crisis' hypothesis of sudden change in an individual's trajectory being due to another life history change can be tested by this study.

The method used

The data were obtained via a door-to-door survey of householders representing a systematic stratified sample of the population of industrial South Wales in the age range 15-65. The life, work and educational histories from the householders and their families were used to define characteristic training or learning trajectories as described in Gorard and others (1997a). All differences and relationships described are significant at the 1% level, using chi-squared, t-tests, one-way analysis of variance, or logistic regression as appropriate. The survey obtained 1,104 outline life histories, with many potential events recorded as a type of episode (such as getting a new job, or starting a new hobby and the date on which it took place. These are the primary data on which the eleven trajectories identified so far are based.

As a first step, extraneous variables were eliminated and the life histories were simplified. Since thetrajectories were formal learning trajectories, the focus was on those events in each life in which a learning episode could or did take place. Although there was considerable variety in the life histories, there were far fewer than 1,104 different patterns of learning when described at this level. There were a large number of histories that included absolutely no report of any formal or leisure-based learning since compulsory schooling. Several histories were partly composed of repeated sequences of changes of state, such as part-time job with initial training, pregnancy, part-time job with initial training, pregnancy. If repeated sequences are considered as identical regardless of their length, then the actual number of different learning histories becomes surprisingly small. In fact, eleven patterns can be used to describe most of the variations, and these can be grouped into five classes for most analyses. It is the fruitfulness of this typology of eleven theoretical trajectories that is the true test of its validity.

Eleven trajectories

Disaffected learner

Fourteen percent of the respondents reported no education or training after initial schooling, while a further 19% reported only the occasional training episode lasting less than one day in total, usually related to health and safety regulations. The first group have no analogue in previous models since they are the group most frequently ignored as they are unapproachable through lists of participants (and only available due to the door-to-door method of access used here). The second group are archetypal Type A learners according to Fevre and others (1997), but the even so the very small scale of their adult training is a surprise. In total these 'non-learners' and near 'non-learners' form a 'disaffected' group representing one third of the total sample.

Delayed learner

Thirteen percent of the respondents are categorised as delayed learners since the first substantive learning episode they report is over two years after they leave initial schooling, and after they have made the transition from school to work (cf. the deferred beginners and others described by McNair 1996 and the discontinuous learners of Hand and others 1994). A few of these are 'twilight' learners (1%), for whom the first substantive learning episode is after becoming permanently economically inactive through retirement or long-term illness. These may be more activity or learner oriented than goal oriented (Harrison 1993). Of the remainder 6% are delayed work-based trainees, perhaps receiving substantive training in their second or subsequent jobs, while 6% are mature students, returning to some form of post-compulsory education after a break.

Immature learner

One percent of respondents still aged 15 and 4% still in full-time education without a break since the age of 16, and these are the 'immature' trajectories.

Transitional learner

The remaining 51% reported some learning during the transition from initial schooling to work. Of these, 10% only received substantive training in their first post after leaving school at the minimum age, and have reported nothing since. A further 9% reported no formal learning since leaving full-time post-compulsory education. Together these may be

Table 1 Trajectories by qualification

Trajectory	Qualification 16+	Qualification FTCE	Qualification life
Non-learner	346	327	259
Near non-learner	399	374	302
Delayed trainee	443	413	501
Deferred student	620	564	596
Twilight learner	348	331	300
False-start trainee	459	429	529
Work-based learner	594	544	698
False-start student	742	832	749
Early learner	780	865	836
School	298	284	220
FTCE	805	807	694

[The table shows the mean rank for each trajectory on an ordinal scale ranging from 0: no qualifications to 8: higher degree equivalent, using Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance, Norusis

thought of as 'false start' trajectories, or as similar to the 'by default' learners described by Hand and others (1994).

Lifetime learner

The remaining respondents have been optimistically classified as 'lifetime' learners since they have reported both transitional and later learning episodes, 19% via further education, and 13% via what may be termed 'apprenticeship'. These two are more like the categories of learners discussed by Tremlett and others (1995), and perhaps identical to the continual learners sketched out by Hand and others(1994).

One way in which the trajectories are clearly different from each other is the level of qualification achieved at different ages (Table 1). The three groups staying on in full-time continuous education (FTCE) are more highly qualified at 16, and they retain this advantage throughout their lives. This suggests that it is not lack of qualification that causes the some people to stop formal learning after the age of 25. Similarly, the three groups with no formal learning episodes are less highly qualified at 16, and this position also continues throughout their lives. The twilight learners have a similar profile to non-learners and are not generally interested in certification. The deferred students have a relatively elevated qualification profile at 16, perhaps suggestive of frustrated early educational ambitions, but allowing them later re-entry to formal education. The work-based learners may have just 'missed the cut' at 5+ GCSEs grades A-C which would have allowed them uncomplicated entry into further education. They would therefore have been prime targets for recruitment to the equivalents of the present Modern Apprenticeship Scheme, which have always had to compete with schools and colleges in a more a less open market for similar school-leavers. The delayed and initial trainees both have qualification profiles in the middle range, perhaps having done enough at school to convince an employer that they were easily 'trainable', but not enough to encourage them to stay on at school. The difference between the two groups may be as simple as a difference of opportunities for immediate local training.

The proportion of respondents displaying each trajectory vary significantly by age. There has been a clear trend away from disaffection and towards participation in some form of adult education since 1945/46 when the oldest respondents left school. The proportion of each cohort reporting no formal learning has decreased (Table 2). However this decrease is not chiefly to do with a greater return to education as an adult. The proportion of delayed learners has held relatively constant, or even decreased. The proportion of lifetime learners has increased, as has the proportion of those only using education as a transitional state.

When these changes are considered for men and women separately (Tables 3, 4), the reduction in disaffection for males took place chiefly for those

Table 2 Trajectory by Age cohort

Trajectory	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Disaffected	13	26	28	37	43
Delayed	4	8	20	17	22
Immature	38	1	-	-	-
Transitional	22	33	17	16	12
Lifetime	24	31	35	31	22

Table 3 Trajectory by Age cohort (men)

Trajectory	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Disaffected	12	25	23	20	34
Delayed	5	11	19	20	22
Immature	38	-	-	-	-
Transitional	21	31	15	17	16
Lifetime	24	33	42	43	29

Table 4 Trajectory by Age cohort (women)

Trajectory	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64
Disaffected	14	27	32	49	54
Delayed	2	6	20	15	23
Immature	37	2	-	-	-
Transitional	24	35	18	15	8
Lifetime	24	29	29	21	15

finishing initial education in the 1950-60s while for women it took place a decade later in the 1970-80s. One implication of this is that it is clear that whereas the reduction in disaffection for men was replaced by an equivalent increase in lifetime learning until the 1980s, for women the increase in lifetime learners was matched by the front-loaded transitional learners. There are still a large number of female non-learners, and a relatively large number of male lifetime learners.

Lifetime learners are slightly more likely to have been born outside the immediate area of their residence, and tend to have older parents of more prestigious social class with better qualifications who are also slightly more likely to have been born outside the immediate area of their residence. Transitional learners have parents who left full-time education several years older than the other trajectories. Delayed learners tend to be older, with more children, having moved house more often, and more frequently reporting a leisure activity requiring sustained study. Delayed and transitional learners have little in common, although both have similarities in some respects to both the disaffected and the lifetime learners.

In fact, the pattern is clearer if the correlates of the four trajectory types are organised into a two by two table, with a row representing participation in later post-compulsory education or training, and a column representing participation in continuous full-time education (Table 5). The pattern could be explained parsimoniously in terms of two sets of correlates — one of participation in education after initial schooling and another of participation in learning later in life. This would explain why delayed learners are no more similar to transitional learners than disaffected ones are to lifetime learners. In addition, early analysis suggests that the kinds of correlates relevant to immediate post-16 learning are personal characteristics, such as age, and events in compulsory schooling, such as qualifications gained. For the later learners however, the correlates are more motivational than structural. These are the respondents who are more likely to move house between geographical regions, and to have a sustained leisure interest requiring study or practice. It is suggested therefore that the determinants of participation at the two life-stages may also differ, perhaps being based on background characteristics such as family occupational class initially, but changing to personal and motivational factors bounded by the opportunity structure in later life. Table 8 also suggests a third class of trajectory determinants, such as gender and area of residence, which may affect participation in learning throughout life.

This two component model of educational determinants could partly explain the changes in the mix since 1945. Most of the policy changes have been front-loaded, encouraging more children to stay on at school, and extending the length of their adolescence (see Gorard and others 1997b). This has led to an increase of both transitional and lifetime learners without affecting their prevalence relative to each other, but has had no positive effect on the numbers returning to education or training. This may seem counter-intuitive to those witnessing a growth of mature students in FE/HE but it may be due to such students changing their patterns of type of participation from LEA evening classes for example to part-time academic courses (that is, robbing Peter to pay Paul). A genuine growth in delayed learning, such as that which occurred for men in South Wales in the 1950s and 1960s, could presumably only be produced under this model by identifying and tackling the specific determinants of delayed participation.

Table 5 The two component model

	POCET yes	POCET no	Correlates
16+ learning	'Lifetime' More male More Bridgend	'Transitional'	Younger Fewer children More qualified, 16
No 16+ learning	'Delayed'	'Disaffected' More female More Blaenau Gwent More truants	Older More children Less qualified, 16
Correlates	More house moves More hobbies	Less house moves Less hobbies	

Predicting trajectories

The trajectories are defined solely in terms of events occurring after initial schooling, but it is possible to predict quite accurately which trajectory someone will be on solely in terms of events occurring up to the end of initial schooling. Thirty one potential predictor variables were fed into a series of equations having a dependent variable with only two values — whether the respondent is predicted to follow a particular trajectory or not (cf. Felstead 1996). For example, a function to decide the odds of an individual being a lifetime learner rather than a disaffected one was 90% accurate (Table 6) with a reasonably clear division between learners and non-learners. The quality of the model in terms of goodness of fit to the data and its log-likelihood is adequate.

This function retained only six predictor variables, all others explaining no significant proportion of the variance net of the effect of the others, using forward stepwise selection via the conditional statistic (Norusis 1994), in order to maximise the effectiveness of the predictions while minimising the number of predictors (Pedhazur 1982). The six independent variables were area of residence, gender, type of school, attempting qualifications, qualification at age 16, and occupational class of father (Table 7). Therefore the age of the respondent as such is not a significant factor. It is the changing influence of determinants such as schooling and family background that matters.

Table 6 Classification Table

observed/predicted	Disaffected	Lifetime	correct
Disaffected	176	24	88.00%
Lifetime	21	206	90.75%

Overall 89.46%

Compared to the average respondent, the odds of being a lifetime learner are the antilogarithm of the sum of each of the coefficients for which the associated variable is 'true' for the individual in question. In theory anyone from the three research areas can be fitted to the equation and their odds calculated. For example, a man living in Neath who attended a grammar school, passing seven O levels whose father was a dentist, would have the following odds of being a lifetime learner.

1/(1+e to the power of (+1.82 +.64 +.60 +.62 +.64 +.75 +.56)) = over 99%

Whereas a woman living in Blaenau Gwent who attend a comprehensive school, attempted no qualifications and whose father was a security guard would have these odds:

1/(1+e to the power of (+1.82 -.64 -.68 -.63 -.64 -.87 -1.74)) = less than 1%

Further analysis also suggests that the predictors to distinguish between a delayed or a transitional trajectory are different to those in Table 7, including family religion, mother's qualifications, mother's age of leaving full-time education, plus gender by truancy, age by area of residence, area by truancy and area by initial qualification interactions. The level of predictability is at least as high as for disaffected/lifetime (93.34%). However, the classification of transitional/lifetime learners is significantly lower (80.03%) which is as would be expected if the two component theory is correct, since both lifetime and transitional learners would presumably share similar initial determinants, differing only in their later determinants whose reporting might be right-censored by the nature of the sampling.

Table 7 Variables in the equation

Variable	Coefficient	Significance
Area of residence	-	.00
Bridgend	+.08	.67
Blaenau Gwent	-.68	.00
Neath Port Talbot	+.60	-
School attended	-	.03
Comprehensive	-.63	.01
Grammar	+.62	.06
Secondary Modern	-.16	.47
Other	+.17	-
Attempt qualifications at 16	+.64	.02
Not attempt qualifications at 16	-.64	-
Qualification at 16	-	.03
none	-.87	.04
elementary	-.27	.44
1 to 4 'O' levels	+.39	.25
5+ 'O' levels	+.75	-
Father's occupation	-	.18
Management/administration	-.01	.99
Professional	+.56	.71
Associate professional	-1.02	.52
Clerical/secretarial	+6.21	.55
Craft and related	-1.18	.38
Personal and protective	-1.74	.22
Sales	-.58	.75
Plant and machine operative	-.83	.54
Other	-1.41	-
Male respondent	+.64	.00
Female respondent	-.64	-
Constant	1.82	.17

[the significance equals the probability that the coefficient is actually zero, as determined by the Wald statistic, Norusis 1994.]

Conclusion

Several hypotheses have been tested by the analysis so far. There are discernible and useful patterns of participation in adult learning. These patterns are predictable, largely in terms of social and educational background. However, their occurrence varies over time and between research sites. The next step is to perform a fuller event history analysis incorporating more interaction effects between the simple predictor variables, to clarify the respective roles of life events such as changing employment, moving house, having a child, or losing a partner in the creation and modification of learning trajectories. In order to test the two component theory it is necessary to consider each of the six two-way predictions between the four mature trajectory types in more detail, and in order to clarify the picture for all trajectory-determinants a series of polychotomous logit loglinear models will be created and the results compared with the stories obtained during the third phase.

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The political/economic boundary of adult and continuing education: a study of three universities

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The recession of the early 1980s saw government funding to Canadian post-secondary education begin to decline and universities turning elsewhere for funds. Combined with an erosion of public support, this resulted in a shift from a traditional liberal arts orientation to a market approach, as part of a more general shift towards 'partnerships' with corporations. Critics of this trend, particularly Buchbinder (1993), and Newsom (1994), argue that the result is an uneven balance of power, with the corporate sector dictating the terms and universities competing with each other to satisfy them. Universities are struggling to cope with economic recession, government fiscal restraint, the rise in student numbers, and new demands from mature students for programmes that refresh and enlarge work-related skills and knowledge. The emergence of an information economy, where international competitiveness and employability are increasingly linked to effective utilisation of competencies, further complicates the situation.

At stake is the permeability of the boundaries that have traditionally separated the university's education and training functions. The internal boundary between the university and continuing education, and the tensions along it, is the site of an ongoing study of the changing vocational role of universities.

Conceptual approach

The study was initiated in 1993 by the Continuing Studies units at Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Victoria to determine (a) how universities interpret the demand and supply signals resulting from changes in the economy, and (b) how these interpretations translate into degree programmes and continuing education and how that affects the 'inner life' of the universities. The research is organised around the following framework: (a) the stakeholders' interpretations of future trends in work and labour markets; (b) the environment and context of university education in British Columbia; (c) the missions and cultures of universities in British Columbia; and (d) the tensions that develop within these universities as they attempt to respond to interpretations of the changing economic and political context. The framework is presented in a report 'The Role of the University in Preparing the Labour Force' (Fisher, Rubenson and Schuetze 1994).

This initial report set the stage for the second phase of the investigation, reported here, comprising: an empirical study; analysis of the political and economic trends affecting universities; location of this discussion within a broader theoretical framework; and speculation on the future implications of current trends. Data for this phase were derived from in-depth interviews with university presidents and vice-presidents, board and senate members, deans and department heads, faculty, and elected faculty and student officials. A total of forty-two interviews were conducted, taped and transcribed. The quotations used to illustrate points in this paper were chosen from these transcriptions to represent the thoughts and attitudes of the interviewed population, rather than individual views. Documentation on the policies, mission and organisation of the universities, structure and content of programmes, and curricula and course demand supplemented the interview data. The analysis indicates an interplay between the external and internal aspects of universities in British Columbia, and examines university responses to changing labour demands.

The institutions

Simon Fraser University (SFU), was established in 1963 to fill the need for another public university in the British Columbia lower mainland created by an increasing number of students becoming eligible for university studies. With an enrolment of more than 20,000 students, and 603 full-time faculty in 63 academic programme areas, SFU is the second largest university in British Columbia. In contrast the University of Victoria (UVIC), was established as a college at the turn of the century, under an affiliation agreement with Montreal's McGill University. It became a university in 1963, at the same time as SFU, and now serves 15,000 students with 750 full-time faculty in 48 academic departments. The University of British Columbia (UBC), was incorporated in 1908 and opened in 1915; it has an enrolment of 35,000 students and 2000 full-time faculty in 93 departments.

Continuing education programmes are established at all three universities. To avoid overlap with existing programmes, niche marketing strategies have been developed. One example is Simon Fraser's clearly articulated policy on lifelong learning and recurrent education. Programmes developed at the downtown Harbour Centre facilities target mid-career professionals. 'Our mandate is to provide access to mid-career programmes for adults with previous post-secondary education or experience, or both' (Senate Paper S88-33). The mandate of UVIC's

Division of Continuing Studies is to provide 'a programme of continuing education in all academic and cultural fields throughout the Province' (University of Victoria 1993, 2). UBC emphasises that one of the principal responsibilities of continuing education is to provide 'a wide array of programmes in continuing education for the general public and for the professions' (Continuing Education 1984, 1).

Distance education units exist in all three universities and have become a preferred mode of delivery for many credit-based courses and programmes. Distance Education Units often work with the British Columbia Open Learning Agency to which all three universities belong.

The principal source of operating funds for universities in British Columbia is the provincial operating grant, which has been steadily shrinking since 1990. This shortfall creates a need to increase income from other sources, such as student fees, investment income, and sales and services. Change in expenditure distribution for the three universities indicate that (a) the resources allocated to academic expenses and library acquisitions have not kept pace with the increase in enrolment, and (b) the increases in administration and general expenses reflect the priority given these categories in expansion of the institutions.

Limitations of the study

As this is a report of a 'work-in-progress' certain limitations must be acknowledged. First, as this is a work in progress it is necessarily descriptive. Second, since only one round of interviewing was conducted in this phase, the data show a picture of each university at one point in time. Third, the emphasis is on the university and how it reacts to its environment not on how universities enact, manage or change their environments. Fourth, as in any project involving interviewing, respondent or retroactive biases are possible. These are minimised by using multiple sources of evidence to check discrepancies. Fifth, the paper's space restrictions only allow for brief summaries, truncating full explorations of the findings to date. Finally, it appears that continuing education, traditionally a 'buffer zone' between 'academia' and 'society', through which higher education was diffused to the society at large, might also be the site of reciprocal social influences on the academy. However, any attempt to analyse the external as well as the internal boundaries not only between education and training, but also between institutional environments more generally must await a longer discussion.

Summary of findings

Preliminary analysis of the data reveals eight broad but consistent themes which have implications for the future of university adult and continuing education in British Columbia.

1) An increase in differentiation and specialisation within the university system.

UBC prides itself on being a research university; UVIC has developed strong university/industry linkages in technology transfer through its co-op programmes (now the third largest co-op in Canada); and SFU integrates continuing studies with other academic programmes to help fulfil its community outreach mandate. The commitment to adult and part-time study is strongest at SFU and UVIC. UBC revised its mission statement to reflect a theoretical commitment to adult and part-time study and lifelong learning only in the late 1980s. The differing levels of commitment are evident in the different cultures of the three universities studied.

At SFU, Continuing Studies is highly integrated with the rest of the university; it is part of the wider ethos. However, a senior administrator expressed concern that budgetary processes which adopt financial criteria as the primary considerations, run counter to traditional continuing studies values.

> We have always maintained that there are some things that we are committed to doing even if they cost money, and the university has to maintain that view as a whole. If we lose sight of our distinctive purpose and mandate, then no amount of budgetary cost cutting or market savvy will make up for that.

These values are clearly evident in the provision of the Downtown Eastside-City Programme (a community outreach programme for the poorest segment of the inner city) alongside a self-funded Executive MBA programme. Some express fear that, under budgetary constraints, programmes like the former would not be developed. There is also an expressed concern about the move toward differentiation, where better universities will be in the position to charge higher fees, and the effects this could have on the university system in British Columbia.

2) The increasing entrepreneurship of senior administration.

There is a trend toward an organisational model that is more bureaucratic, corporate, and directed to the market. Many respondents feel university presidents and administrators are becoming too entrepreneurial and that this has a negative influence on the universities. Respondents from the three universities expressed similar complaints:

> There's a sense that making money for the university is becoming a pre-occupation of the administration, at the expense of other things. It's beginning to shape what we do or what we are expected to do. Whenever senior administrators speak to faculty members it is always about the budget crunch, and that's very demoralizing. There's a lot of resistance because to the extent that

> you accept money ... the tenor of the institution changes.
>
> Most people I know would say that the direction the university has taken over the past say ten years, has been very negative. Professors are subject to more and more vigilance on the part of university administrators citing economy and accountability.
>
> What I perceive is extreme alienation, ... a lot of my colleagues are really, really turned off in quite a serious way. People think of the institution as a sort of loathsomely bureaucratic monster with which they want to have as little to do as possible.

Market demands are inter-disciplinary or multi-disciplinary whereas university organisations are disciplinary. Therefore, interdisciplinarity is becoming more evident on all three campuses, in the form of interdisciplinary research centres, joint research facilities, University-Industry liaison offices, Networks of Centres of Excellence, and increasing numbers of graduate students admitted to Individual Interdisciplinary programmes.

3) Continuing Education Units (CEU) are being forced to focus less on traditional programmes because of moves to cost recovery.

By forcing continuing education divisions to adopt a more vocational orientation and demanding cost-recovery modes of operation, universities are transforming these divisions into consultancy services to provide revenues. One senior administrator summed it up thus:

> If you are in a cost-recovery mode of operation, you're forced to only offer those kinds of programmes that the marketplace will buy. General interest, public affairs, general science, those kinds of programmes just will not attract fee payers, whereas vocationally or occupationally oriented workplace programmes will.

A continuing education dean lamented:

> Generally we've been seen as a cash cow. They come in and scoop whatever they can and leave us just enough to survive and kind of scramble up the side of the precipice again. We'll work like hell for a while, and then when necessary, they'll come and make another scoop.

A professor indicated that this is not just a regional concern:

> There's movement on the part of continuing educators right across the country into exclusively workplace servicing programmes rather than the kinds of things that university continuing educators were famous for, like public affairs, liberal arts, and general studies types of programmes, culture, the big issues, political issues, and that type of thing.

This trend to cost recovery is resulting in commodification with an increase in differential fees, full cost recovery, and programmes for profit. The University of British Columbia (UBC) has aggressively pursued the move toward full cost recovery and is now the only institution in Western Canada that provides no core operating funds to continuing education. In 1991 they revised the organisational structure of continuing education to operate under the administrative management of a newly created office of the Associate Vice-President, Continuing Studies (University of British Columbia, 1991). Item (iii) of this plan refers to the expectation that

> continuing studies courses and programmes would operate on a full cost-recovery basis, which will eventually include an overhead charge of 25 percent on the costs of delivering the programmes. (p. 7)

A trend toward the sale of services is also evident. The Faculty of Applied Science at SFU established a training programme in Korea in 1996 which brought in approximately $150,000. The Child and Youth Care Programme at UVIC operates a full cost recovery programme for a First Nations band in Manitoba.

4) As opportunity structures continue to bifurcate in the labour market, universities attempt to capture the 'good jobs' and professional re-training markets.

Most of the 'good jobs' will require sophisticated levels of technological knowledge — of computers, communications systems, and of technologies not yet invented. To meet this perceived need there is a trend to increased enrolment in graduate studies.

> UBC decided to put more emphasis on the graduate programme in the last decade, ... I don't think there is a department or faculty now that doesn't have some graduates ... it was part of the strategy of this administration.

The University of Victoria is also expanding its graduate programme, but for different reasons.

We are getting involved in quite a large expansion of graduate study which has changed the nature of the place ... it's been very important in making us into a university that more resembles most other state or provincial universities in North America. ... graduate study was important to justify our existence as a university in British Columbia.

The rate of increase in graduate enrolment has exceeded the rate of undergraduate enrolment at all three universities.

5) A noticeable trend to internationalisation.

The new climate rewards entrepreneurial efforts, and there is a trend toward the sale of places to international students for profit. All three universities are pursuing international graduate students, and selling services internationally. One person describes this market-driven approach as 'going for international students who can pay the big bucks'.

Another justified the move:

> Given the federal cutbacks and provincial budget freezes we would be fools not to be looking for some other sources ... and bringing in ten percent international students ... but you have to bring in rich international students ... we are really in it for the bucks.

Emphasis is also placed on the design and delivery of international programmes:

> One of the biggest, hottest items at the moment is international programmes. For one reason, ... it generally brings in some big bucks.

6) A tendency toward an increase in vocationalism as the universities compete to provide training of highly skilled technical employees.

Over the past decade responsibility for training technical employees and retraining professionals has shifted from adult and continuing education to academic faculties. Adult and continuing education units are seeing their traditional role erode. As one senior administrator comments,

> The last ten years have not been good for continuing education across the country. They've not been good for adult education as a field across the country. Both of those areas failed to capitalize on opportunities that were there and continue to fail ... and if the universities don't do any better at it than the adult education departments and the continuing education units in universities, then other people will move in.

The current emphasis is on vocational programmes run for 'continuing education credit' rather than academic or degree transfer credit. For example, at UBC Continuing education offers a range of vocationally oriented courses for 'diploma credit', which are not transferable to a degree. Programmes which are entirely 'certificate or diploma credit' no longer require Senate approval. This means that the academic legitimacy of the courses rests with Continuing Studies. This allows Continuing Studies to develop and market programmes without the lengthy delays common to the Senate review process. Therefore, vocationally oriented programmes can be mounted quickly to satisfy consumer demand. However, the downside of this is that professional diplomas or professional development traditionally offered by Continuing Education Units, are now the prerogative of academic departments.

7) Increasing competition among the three universities for state, research, and corporate funding, as well as competition for students.

Evidence of increasing competition can be found in the establishment of academy-industry liaison offices competing for research funds, and international liaison offices competing for student dollars. In research funded by the private sector, UBC now has one of the highest percentages of any university in North America. As more partnerships are developed with business and industry, there are fears of decreased university autonomy and a diminished public sphere. One university governor stated:

Partnerships or commercial type arrangements are just the nose of the camel ... one can see the dangers when one company is given the monopoly in return for some kick-back to the institution.

As universities establish commercial relationships they become more profit oriented. There are concerns that internal cultures will be negatively affected. For example, at UBC

> every faculty has now been given its own development officer and told to go out there and ... get their own money ... that's the pressure.

8) Bridging function for continuing education

Statements of mission for the three universities stress the 'bridging function' of continuing education programmes and courses, particularly non-credit general interest courses. The continuing studies divisions are expected to bring the work of the university to the wider community. Policy documents emphasise the importance of the linkages between continuing education programmes and the job market, as well as satisfaction of individual and societal needs and interests. Simon Fraser University, through its Harbour Centre Campus, provides the best illustration of this bridging function, by being accessible to the community through location of the downtown campus, and the spirit of the programmes and courses offered through continuing education. Statements such as the following sum this up:

> We have never, in this institution, allowed finances to determine what we do in Continuing Studies. It may shape what we do, but it does not determine what we do because we feel that a liberal education is more than education for its own sake — it is education that is relevant to the general public interest.
>
> The university has an obligation to contribute to the cultural, social and political advancement, and awareness of the community.

Implications

The trends identified in this study have implications for the status, boundaries and content of adult and continuing education. New demands on universities, brought about by rapid technological and social changes, are contributing to internal tensions and affecting the permeability of boundaries. At the same time, institutions are under intense pressure to deliver knowledge and skills relevant to existing conditions, and to do it in a more cost-efficient manner. By altering funding strategies, governments are eradicating the boundaries which gave adult and continuing education its distinctiveness. Loss of funding causes the elimination or amalgamation of university programmes, departments, and institutions. Universities then become instruments of production to satisfy the growing skill demand.

Adult educators have long argued that the mission of adult and continuing higher education is to link knowledge requirements of adult learners to university resources. If this is the case, then the boundary between the academy and the world of work becomes an increasingly important arena affecting opportunities for adults to learn and benefit from relevant education. The establishment of boundaries is one method by which relevance is determined. But relevance must also be conceived broadly. Equally important are the interests of individuals who require the skills that economies need now and in the future. What the early results of this study imply is that a degree of co-ordination and planning is required, and that this must involve all interested parties. The issue for universities is the extent to which continuing education and existing programmes with explicit vocational aims, prepare individuals for a changing labour market. Of equal importance is the balance between general and specialised programmes. Universities, in partnership with employers, labour and government, must be cognisant of their role in providing relevant knowledge and skills throughout an individual's lifetime.

Further analysis is required to determine what goes on in the 'buffer zone' between the academy and society that is continuing education. While it is acknowledged that this is an area for the diffusion of higher education to society at large, not much recognition is given to the idea that the university might also be absorbing societal influences through this buffer zone. Are societal influences going 'through' continuing education to the university or are they going around it? Is the way that universities are reconfiguring continuing education a direct or indirect response to these influences — or does it depend on which part of the picture one focuses on? Further analysis would also benefit from a comparison of what goes on in the 'core' of the university with what takes place on the periphery of continuing education. For example, does inter-disciplinarity in graduate education mean the same thing in continuing education?

There is a need for a deeper understanding of the role of continuing education in the university and society. This ongoing study is an attempt to address some of the issues arising from the processes of transformation currently underway.

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Rewriting the boundaries of practice: storying the work of a transformative pedagogy

Group for Collaborative Inquiry[1], USA

The United States and other western nations have distinguished ourselves in the twentieth century by our individualistic orientation and fragmenting epistemology. We think of ourselves as autonomous and self-constructing — at odds with our communities and environment. We understand ourselves in parts, relegating the care and development of these parts to a host of experts: cognition to educators, emotion to psychologists, physical health to physicians, and spiritual well-being to the clergy.

In this paper, we propose a model of learning and way of educating based on the integration rather than the fragmentation of human beings and their communities. Central to this model are the concepts of whole-person learning, learning-in-relationship, permeability of boundaries, and mutability.

Whole-person learning describes the engagement of our cognitive, affective, somatic, intuitive, and spiritual selves in learning. It also implies our memories of the past, hopes for the future, and attempts to make meaning of ourselves in the present.

Learning-in-relationship includes individual and group learning and the relationship between the two. For the individual as learner, learning-in-relationship is learning in the context of a relationship that supports personal learning. For the group as learner, the group is no longer individuals pursuing personal growth and development, but a unit whose goal is to create knowledge held mutually by all members of the group. Between the individual and the group, learning-in-relationship is a growing consciousness of the delicate interaction of mutual growth.

Permeable boundaries refer to the notion that we are not discrete beings, but interconnected. Taken to an extreme, it implies a merging between people. Whereas the ideology of individualism requires increasingly well-defined personal boundaries separating each of us from all others, permeable boundaries suggest an openness between ourselves and others that allows an exchange of knowing and being.

The concept of mutability embraces the idea of change, eschewing the idea of set curricula and instead, acknowledging that what adults need today is the ability to take in new and dissonant information, learn their way through ambiguous and chaotic situations, and move across multiple world views as they live and work with people of differing background, languages and cultures.

These four components of learning are interdependent. For example, working with mutability presupposes that adult educators encourage students to reflect on their experience not only cognitively, but emotionally, somatically, and spiritually as well, to reflect on and develop their relationships with others in the learning-focused community, and to give freely of their learning with others while also learning how to be open to the potential value of what others bring.

Exploring the practice

As adult educators, we have come to take for granted that learning is an individual activity, developing our practice and literature to focus on the individual and, for the most part, being blind to the role played by the group context within which much of learning takes place. Self-directed learning, self-managed learning, self-actualisation, learning contracts, and individual evaluations all contribute to understanding learners as autonomous and knowledge as proprietary.

The questions our notion of learning requires us to ask are how do we facilitate learning that is integrated rather than autonomous and fragmented and what does this new understanding of learning require of me as an adult educator?

Methodology

Our research methodology uses the same integrated learning process we describe in this paper. Our model of integrated learning is based on five case studies of adult learning in a variety of contexts including a corporation, a university, a church, and two in a community (Group for Collaborative Inquiry 1994). Our current work extends the original study to focus on the relationship between the individual and the group, and on the role of the facilitator/educator. These new case studies of adults learning in groups are from the contexts of staff development, a non-traditional doctoral programme, a traditional graduate programme, and a community-based inquiry.

Our methodology integrates collected data with data from our own lives. All data were transcribed, including our meaning-making sessions. The collected data include interviews, documents, and field observations. Our group analysed and made meaning of the data collectively, returning to the raw data several times to check our emerging analysis. During these cycles, a heuristic inquiry emerged in which we, as researchers, asked 'What is our experience of this phenomenon?'. Our reflections on our own experience aided us in understanding the transformative learning process and the challenges of this process for adult educators.

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[1] The Group for Collaborative Inquiry is a group of practitioner-scholars who do research and write in the areas of transformative learning and collaborative inquiry. We include Kathleen Loughlin, Gwendolyn Kaltoft, Elizabeth Kasl, and Annie Brooks

The stories

This section explores the experience of integrated learning. Having identified the concepts of whole person learning, learning in relationship, permeable boundaries, and mutability, we will now illustrate how they are woven together in the learning environment.

Gwendolyn's story

This story is about a member of the nursing staff working for a small order of women religious in the midwestern United States. The order has a total of 75 Sisters, 50 of whom live in the Motherhouse convent where the staff work. About fifteen of the 50 Sisters live on a unit that provides health care for nuns who are largely well elderly and need assistance with activities of daily living. The staff is made up of nursing assistants and a few professional nurses. Together we provide nursing care, assistance with daily living, and support in acute illness. All women caregivers, we vary in age, race, nationality, education, and life experience.

When I came to this environment several years ago, there was a feeling of discontentment and disconnectedness among the staff. I sensed that many staff were emotionally injured from a supervisory model that had preceded me — a model of management that promoted 'getting the work done' in an instrumental way without attention to the whole lives of the Sisters who were being cared for or the complexity of the lives of the caregivers themselves. The structure was a traditional one of top down, hierarchical decision-making, where staff had little to no input on caring methods, but did their daily work following orders and intimidation. None of this, in my experience, was unusual in a health care setting. The disjuncture here was that as caregivers we were in the home of women religious who had devoted years to honing a collaborative model of operating their community.

The nursing staff described the toll this disjuncture took on them in anger and frustration and doubt and suspicion of power and authority. As an adult educator I had a vision of collaborative management. From the beginning I spoke my language; however because I had not worked with America's working poor before, I did not understand the nuances of their anger and suspicion. With empowerment education in mind, I initiated a three-fold strategy to transform the staff culture. The most obvious needs were to enhance the staff's capacity for caring. I began where the staff were. I saw that these women genuinely cared for the elder Sisters, but did not have a language to tell about how they acted out their caring. Therefore, I spent a great deal of time talking with and mirroring their own words about how they cared back to them. Simultaneously, I saw the need for an employee assistance programme. While the EAP needs were more complex than this work environment could support, we adapted resources to match needs. The few professional staff and the administrative Sisters assisted individuals with getting more education, securing health insurance, and identifying life needs of themselves and their families. Finally, through meetings and daily work, we involved each staff member in decision-making about her work.

The new culture we mutually developed contrasted sharply with our old environment. Betty captured this when she said: 'I'd go [into other facilities] and they'd say: 'your job is to take care *of* them [residents], not care *for* them. There is a difference ... There is no possible way that you can [not *care for* people] if you've been with people for so long'. Betty and other staff care deeply *for* the Sisters whom they take care *of;* as adult women they are fully competent in instrumental maintenance *and* relational caring. The management ignorance of the staff's capacity to care *for* the Sisters had been a fuel for their fires of anger and suspicion of power and authority.

Finally, race and skin colour has been a major issue for us. In the beginning, I thought I understood the problem of racism. However, about nine months after I'd been there, I discovered I had deeply offended an African American employee shortly after my arrival. I was mortified and embarrassed when I realised what I had done. I was also stunned that Marie, who I perceived as such a forthright person, had hidden her pain from me for over six months. She, on the other hand, said, 'I didn't tell you because I didn't want to hurt your feelings'. To untangle the hurt, we mutually decided to invite a number of other staff to a conversation about our incident and about racism in our environment. We tape recorded and transcribed that conversation. Since then, with the permission of the staff, I have shared that transcript with the administrative Sisters and with colleagues in order to ask for action and reflection about racism. Through my action, which exposed the ugliness of what I had said, I modelled vulnerability and openness. Through this experience, Marie learned that she could be more of her total black self in this white environment. I learned courage.

In reflecting about my self and what I have learned through this work, I understand the power of learning from experience in a new way. I came to this place with a deep commitment to empowerment and social justice. In retrospect, I now see my assumptions which I could not see at the time. Because I had lived with considerable oppression myself, I thought I understood people's deepest feelings. I assumed I understood the anger of America's working poor and the pain and rage of people of colour. I came to this work with a deeply held value that I must pay attention to what has heart and meaning. With the women on the staff and the Sisters, I have learned that in order to learn transformatively, I must expose my heart and be present to others' truths.

Annie's story

... and there was a new voice,
which you slowly
recognised as your own,
that kept you company
as you strode deeper and deeper
into the world...
(The Journey by Mary Oliver*)*

I never intended to get involved in this group. I had enough problems. I was just trying to keep my head above water, frantically paddling while at the same time, scanning the water for sharks. But women doctoral students in this predominantly white male department were struggling and several of them had privately consulted me as only one of two women in the department. This made me raise my head from my own concerns and attend to theirs.

This is the story of a collaborative inquiry group on 'how women gain voice in academia'. Julie came to my office one day to ask about the work I had been doing with collaborative inquiry, and inevitably, the conversation turned to oblique allusions to the climate of the department. Together, we decided to form a collaborative inquiry group. Julie posted an announcement calling for participation, and ten women showed up at the organisational meeting, one choosing not to continue with the group. I was the only professor, and the rest of the women were doctoral in the department. I was determined to minimise the power differences between myself and the doctoral students, so except for sharing my story and contributing to our methodology, I held back so that the doctoral students would do the facilitation and make the decisions.

We began the inquiry by gathering data. We spent two days listening to each of us tell our educational life histories. *Olivia* was poor and smart — a lethal combination. *Grace* was a Mexican-American whose parents kept her from learning Spanish. Her extended family spoke Spanish, and she never could talk with her grandparents. *Kimberly* was an athlete in a time when girls were neither encouraged nor supported in athletic pursuits. *Annie* was kicked out of high school over a censorship issue in the school newspaper she was editing. *Ava*, a Mexican-American, was too smart to be a girl and learned to be sexy instead. *Bev* was labelled as emotionally disabled as a child and her dissertation chair still used the label with her. *Mica's* father was alcoholic, and she found refuge in academic performance. *Jennifer* always tried to be good. She has only just begun to be 'bad enough' to speak out against and do research on racism. *Iris* grew up in a family of boys. She tried hard not to 'play ball just like a girl'. Emotions have no place on the ball field.

Thus, our initial data were our own educational life histories. The following comes from a paper we presented at an education conference:

> Many of us agreed the experience of sharing our personal lives with others like ourselves was very spiritual and intense ... In focusing on our own stories, we not only engaged in a passionate form of research that was personally and socially transformative, but used this transformative experience as the centre of a project of producing knowledge for society ...We recorded, transcribed, and coded these biographies and then came together again for what Van Maanen refers to as the 'headwork' of qualitative research. For several sessions following the taping of our educational autobiographies, we interacted and reflected collaboratively upon our stories using a round table format. We made meaning out of our own words, adding additional stories, recording this work, and eventually developing themes...In our first meeting, we committed to a collaborative form of producing knowledge ... 'in which all researchers are insiders, the data are our own, we make meaning together, and the group, not individually listed researchers, own the text' (Group for Collaborative Inquiry 1994). (The Voices Group 1996)

This group provides an example of how transformation occurred not only in the lives of individual participants, but in the development of a new group story, a mostly unspoken story, about the experiences of women in the academy. We have begun to make these stories public in presentations and papers. Finally, we talked about what the collaborative inquiry process had meant to each of us. These reflections bring substance to a theoretical understanding of how whole person learning, learning in relationship, permeable boundaries, and mutability play a part in the transformative process.

Whole person learning

> When we were sharing our stories, it was almost spiritual — very emotional — it's very hard to put into words what we were sharing with each other. That was a very good process for me, and I left there feeling that this is even more important than my dissertation. *Julie*

Learning-in relationship

> I think there's power in the connection. One thing is that I've carried the power of the group with me in terms of feeling stronger, safer. One of the things I struggle with is this tension between my scholarship and sexuality. There was an opportunity in a class where I actually did some challenging. I said something like, 'There were three queers here, and nobody talked about that'. Two members of this group were in that room, and I don't think I would have had the stuff to open that up without the power. It wasn't anything any of us had ever talked about. It was just having the strength of people I knew cared about me in that room. *Kimberly*

Permeable boundaries

> In just a few hours you knew more about each other's thoughts and feeling than a friend or partner might after many years. At first, the speed and intensity with which we broke the boundaries of normal social discourse left me reeling. I was uncertain as to what my responsibility to group members was. Were we friends? Did I have responsibility for following up with group members who seemed stressed? Should we send each other Christmas cards? Gradually, I realised my only responsibility was to be as present and awake as I could be in the time we were together. *Ava*

Mutability

> I found collaborative inquiry to be incredibly intellectually interesting and invigorating...It led me to make connections to larger ideas and took me out of myself to a higher level of consciousness. Hearing the similarities in the stories, even when the experiences were dramatically different, allowed me to disembed from the moment and see social systems at work in our lives. My mind frequently seemed like a pinball machine as it expanded to make connections between experiences, ideas, theories, and systems. *Olivia*

These fragments from participants' reflections illustrate the way the four conceptual pieces of the theory are integrated in our learning experience. I use the word 'participants' to refer to not only the eight doctoral students, but myself, too. Maintaining a power equilibrium between myself and the doctoral students seemed important to me in making this inquiry successful. The role of 'professor' in a traditional southern white research university carries has hierarchical overtones. Similarly, as a participant, I had to make myself vulnerable to a group of students by sharing my life history, one that was as full of pain, joy, mortification, and struggle as each of theirs. I was uncomfortable telling the story of being kicked out of high school. It seemed incompatible with the professor's mantle employment at the university had conveyed upon me. I also had to confront my position of being an institutional employee and a colleague of the very people by whom the eight doctoral students were feeling victimised. I myself felt victimised. But I had a family to support and a paycheck to earn, and I felt at risk in participating in generating subversive stories together. I had to fight my professional competitive urge to take credit for our work. After all, I had introduced them to collaborative inquiry. I could claim them as my mentees and so take a bigger share of the credit for what we had done together. I could write a book and fill it with their descriptions of participation in group inquiry. But I knew that would be a betrayal of the sort we all had too often experienced in academia. Facilitating an integrative learning experience developmental for me. I had to ask what was right and do it. I had to relinquish my formal position of dominance and share power. I had to admit that I could learn from my students and that they could take care of and teach me as surely as I could them.

Conclusion

We began our work by asking, 'What does it require of me as an adult educator if learning includes the whole person, occurs in relationship, requires a move toward more openness rather than increasing boundedness, and is a process of inquiry rather than simply the mastery of a body of knowledge?' With the surprise of genuine discovery, we have learned that we ourselves must enter fully into the process that we imagined we had come to facilitate for others. We begin to perceive that the central element of a pedagogy that can foster the integrated learning which we believe facilitates transformation is our own openness to learning in relationship.

Because the rhetoric in adult education literature about facilitation suggests attitudes of support and respect for students, its radical contrast with the pedagogy we advocate is masked. This new pedagogy requires us to participate as learners, not as experts who know how to help others learn. This attitude of peerness can leave us feeling naked, as Annie felt when she stepped from under the professor's mantle to tell students about her experience of being kicked out of high school. In bringing our whole person to the educational encounter, we may often discover challenges that require acts of moral courage. Gwendolyn exposed herself to shame and public censure for her own racism; Annie felt herself to be at genuine risk when she joined with students to uncover and make public stories of abuse within the university. Both these acts grew out of intentional, conscious embrace of a new pedagogy; they were expressions of whole persons, vulnerable, in service of being in relationship with learners.

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Generic outcomes: a challenge to established educational boundaries

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One reason that traditional educational boundaries have tended to marginalise adult education is the perception that while 'real' education centres on students learning content (the academic 'subjects' or 'disciplines'), adult education has no such agreed content. However, traditional educational boundaries are being questioned currently by the emerging worldwide interest in generic outcomes for the various educational levels. Personal attributes concerning capacities to plan and organise, to relate effectively to others, plus various reasoning abilities, are prominent amongst these generic outcomes. Since adult education in its broadest sense has been characterised by a strong focus on personal generic capacities like self-direction, learning from experience and reflection, this trend potentially could reposition adult education within education as a whole.

This emerging interest in outcomes of the various types of educational provision is often inspired by economic rationalism. For many, this is enough reason to reject it. For others, a focus on generic outcomes signals the end of liberal education and, hence, a subversion of genuine education by economic considerations. However, these debates, in order to genuinely engage with the relevant educational issues, need to go beyond mere labelling of the enemy and to scrutinise closely the nature of educational outcomes, whatever their origins might be. After all, there is the genetic fallacy. This paper is not inquiring about the pedigree of proponents of outcomes-based education, but rather asking whether outcomes by their nature are in any way inconsistent with education as such.

To sharpen these issues I will evaluate the claim that a focus on outcomes is inevitably inimical to liberal education and to the development of the repertoire of cognitive abilities that traditionally has marked quality education. To do this, I briefly consider characterisations of liberal education by several notable writers and then successively outline and evaluate arguments that have been advanced for the alleged deleterious effects of outcomes-based education on liberal education. This latter discussion is illustrated by examples of desirable outcomes for higher education advanced by various writers.

Liberal education and outcomes

Anderson is a well known defender of liberal education as the only type of genuine education. According to Anderson, education is 'the development of judgement or of criticism ... the development of an objective view of things'. (1980, 117). Socrates represents for him the detached, disinterested, objective inquiry that is the genuine educational outlook. Anderson finds in Socrates and his predecessors the highwater mark of this educational outlook. Hence he often links education and culture with what he calls 'classicism'. For Anderson classical studies are crucial for education:

> Their interest is not antiquarian; it is in standards of criticism that apply as much to the present as to any other time. What makes works and periods 'classical' is their objectivity, their demonstration of the ways of working of things themselves (of human and non-human nature) as against personal purposes and local requirements. It is not merely (though this is true, too) that with the passage of time special interests fall into the background and the achievements of disinterestedness more and more stand out; that would apply to the study of the past in general. But there have been conditions under which disinterestedness (culture) rose to extraordinary heights, and it is because classical Athens provides an outstanding example of this that it is especially worthy of study now or at any time. (Anderson 1980, 178)

The preceding points are summarised in Anderson's contrast between classical and utilitarian views of education :

> ... the classical and the utilitarian views of education are distinguished as employing intrinsic and extrinsic criteria, the one considering education in its own character, as the development of thinking or criticism, the other considering it in its contribution to something else, subordinating it in this way to the non-educational and running the greatest risk of distorting its character. (Anderson 1962, 189)

At this stage we can note that Anderson's view of education as 'the development of judgement ... of criticism ... of an objective view of things' sounds very much like an outcome.

Schipp (1985), writing in defence of the liberal education provision of the Workers' Educational Association, echoes Anderson in his characterisation of liberal education as 'objective, disinterested and critical'. For Schipp, liberal education is '... the serious, objective and critical study of nature and society in its various aspects, past and present; as well as of the history and appreciation of the arts (literature, music, architecture, painting, sculpture, etc.)' (Schipp 1985, 3).

'Objective, disinterested and critical' study focuses more on the pursuit of knowledge and the

> processes which promote it; on the demands of the discipline itself; and it assumes the essential open-endedness of inquiry. (Schipp 1985, 5)

Schipp contrasts the liberal education approach with 'partisanship':

> ... partisanship is displayed in courses where the tutor pursues the objective of gaining acceptance from the students of assertions or theories ... or of the virtue of adopting *certain attitudes or beliefs* ... Such partisan objectives tend to the adoption of persuasive rather than rational discourse, to an inadequate presentation of opposing views ..., and to the at least implicit suppression of critical discussion. (Schipp 1985, 6)

Schipp and Anderson are agreed that the pedagogy of successful liberal education requires a firm focus on education for its own sake. Once again Schipp's characterisations of the nature of liberal education look very much like a series of outcomes. One question that Schipp does not ask is whether the promotion of liberal education in the form that he favours is itself partisan. Schipp seems to be confident that his view of liberal education is the only rational, and hence, right, one.

Hirst's well known attempt to ground liberal education in forms of knowledge also explicitly employs outcomes. For Hirst, the main outcome of liberal education is 'the development of mind' (1965, 99). This development of mind can be conceptualised in terms of the 'forms of knowledge' which are 'the complex ways of understanding experience' (1965, 96) which humankind has achieved. Hirst (1965, 105) identifies seven distinct forms of knowledge: mathematics, physical sciences, human sciences, history, religion, literature and the fine arts, philosophy. He admits that there are various ways of providing a liberal education, for example, directly by studying the various branches of the disciplines that constitute the forms of knowledge or indirectly by studying a certain theoretical or practical field in such a way as to develop the learner's mind across the range of forms of knowledge. However, Hirst sees dangers in the latter type of option as liberal education may be lost sight of in favour of the development of skills and techniques. As before, Hirst's view of liberal education is presented in terms of desirable outcomes. The development of mind that is central to liberal education has as its 'outcome' the 'achievement of a series of discrete ways of understanding experience' plus an understanding of 'the complex interrelationships' between them (1965, 110).

Thought about the nature of liberal education has undergone significant changes as the work of Bailey (1984) shows. At first sight, Bailey's characterisation of liberal education is familiar enough:

> Liberal education ... achieves through the development of reason the liberation from the present and the particular; it focuses upon the fundamental and the generalisable; and it has concern for the intrinsically worthwhile rather than for the solely utilitarian. (Bailey 1984, 26)

However, Bailey (1984, 80ff.) is concerned that liberal education is too often portrayed (for example in the authors considered above) as narrowly focused on theoretical knowledge as 'bodies of true propositions'. He emphasises that it also should include '... areas of human 'goings-on' which are the actions, makings, doings, dispositions, expressions and interactions which give meaning, point and significance' to the true propositions. Bailey mentions Wittgenstein's language games as examples of human 'goings-on'. Thus, for Bailey, liberal education includes important components of 'knowing how'. He rejects the view that 'knowing how' is '... no more than being able to perform the appropriate action' (1984, 59). Bailey suggests that we should say 'is able to' or 'can' '... when *all* we are speaking about is the performance ...'. Rather, 'know how' should be kept for all those cases where we *are* suggesting rather more than mere performance. He suggests that the 'more' might be something like:

> (i) having some conception, presented to myself in some form, of what I am doing and how it is differentiated from other things that I might be doing;
> (ii) having some understanding of what I am doing in the sense of knowing why I do certain things to achieve other things; and perhaps
> (iii) providing evidence of (i) and (ii) in an account given to another person.

Another way of putting this is to say that we talk about *knowing* how to do something when the performance is, as it were, an intelligent performance executed with a background of evidential beliefs about it. We might thus define it: I *know* how to do something when I perform the action correctly (or have recently done so more than once) and have a background of at least some beliefs about the action that appropriately conclusive evidence entitles me to be sure about.

Overall, Bailey's claim is that '... the objects of liberal education, in so far as they concern pupil performances, must be to get pupils to *know* how to do things and not merely to be able to do them.' Once again, liberal education is being specified in terms of outcomes, though somewhat different ones from those specified by the authors considered earlier.

This recent concern within the liberal education tradition that theory not be elevated over practice is taken even further by Hirst. His latest work represents a notable repudiation of his earlier influential work of the 1960s. Hirst's revised position, which once again centres on the outcomes of education, is as follows:

> I now consider practical knowledge to be more fundamental than theoretical knowledge, the former being basic to any clear grasp of the proper significance of the latter. But my argument now is not merely for the priority of practical knowledge in education, but rather for the priority of personal development by initiation into a complex of specific, substantive social practices with all the knowledge, attitudes, feelings, virtues, skills, dispositions and relationships that that involves. It is those practices that can constitute a flourishing life that I now consider fundamental to education. (Hirst 1993, 197)

In summary, an examination of some basic writings on liberal education has suggested that the notion of outcomes as such is in no way inconsistent with liberal education. Hence, recent efforts to specify outcomes for WEA courses (Daines 1994, 1996) may not be as misguided as some have thought. Perhaps the recent worry about outcomes evident amongst some educators is more to do with the *kinds* of outcomes that have been proposed rather than with the notion of outcomes as such. Let us consider some possibilities along these lines.

Arguments against outcomes-based education

1. The 'outcomes as extrinsic' argument

Earlier, we found Anderson contrasting what he calls the 'classical' and the 'utilitarian' views of education by their employment of intrinsic and extrinsic criteria respectively. According to Anderson, the *intrinsic* features of education like disinterested inquiry and critical judgement are destroyed if brought into contact with *extrinsic* considerations whether vocational, economic, social, political or religious. Thus genuine education is 'education for its own sake'. Perhaps the view that outcomes are inconsistent with genuine education derives from the current interest in outcomes largely arising from vocational, economic, social, political considerations. If so, attention has been drawn already to the genetic fallacy of mistaking something's origins for its nature.

In fact, most of the proposed outcomes for higher education seem to be ones that are clearly intrinsic to the educational enterprise itself. For example, Jackson (1995) has proposed the following undergraduate competencies:

- Access to existing knowledge
- Command of existing knowledge
- Criticism of existing knowledge
- Exploration of issues with existing knowledge
- Creation of new knowledge
- Identification of ethical dimensions of a problem or issue
- Teamwork

With the possible exception of the last one, these competencies are very compatible with the various outcomes of liberal education noted above. Certainly they are intrinsic to education in the sense employed by Anderson and others.

Similar remarks apply to many of the components of the 'Profile of the lifelong learner' proposed recently by Candy, Crebert and O'Leary (1994, 43-4):

- An inquiring mind
  a love of learning;
  a sense of curiosity and question asking;
  a critical spirit;
  comprehension monitoring and self-evaluation;
- Helicopter vision
  a sense of the interconnectedness of fields
  an awareness of how knowledge is created in at least one field of study, and an understanding of the methodological and substantive limitations of that field;
  breadth of vision;
- Information literacy
  knowledge of major current sources available in at least one field of study;
  ability to frame researchable questions in at least one field of study;
  ability to locate, evaluate, manage, and use information in a range of contexts;
  ability to retrieve information using a variety of media;
  ability to decode information in a variety of forms: written, statistical, graphs, charts, diagrams and tables;
  critical evaluation of information;
- A sense of personal agency
  a positive concept of oneself as capable and autonomous;
  self-organisation skills (time management, goal-setting, etc.);
- A repertoire of learning skills
  knowledge of one's own strengths, weaknesses and preferred learning style;
  range of strategies for learning in whatever context one finds oneself; and
  an understanding of the differences between surface and deep level learning.

By being more detailed and specific, this profile goes well beyond the various outcomes of liberal education noted above. However, it does, I think, incorporate most of those outcomes. Where it goes well beyond the various outcomes of liberal education, for example 'ability to retrieve information using a variety of media', such capacities are evidently not in conflict with 'genuine' educational outcomes. As long as the focus is not exclusively on the various outcomes that are not so central to liberal education, there is no threat to 'genuine' education. Once again, rather than well thought-out outcomes being inimical to the educational process in that they are extrinsic to it, they are, rather, a rich description of what learners immersed in that process should look like.

2. The 'outcomes as practical' argument

Another possible source of the view that outcomes are inconsistent with genuine education is the perception that outcomes are practical. Certainly there is a strand within liberal education thought, and within educational thought generally, that 'education for its own sake' means intellectual development with no object beyond itself. As already noted, Bailey, from within the liberal education tradition, has been critical of this trend. Nevertheless this attachment to the purity of the theoretical is very strong. According to Anderson, there is an unbridgeable gulf between the *theoretical* and the *practical*. For Anderson any encroachment of practical matters into education distracts it from the development of reasoning and critical thinking. On various occasions he recommended an entirely theoretical university 'in which all training would be training in theory, all subjects 'discussion subjects', all courses exercises in criticism' with all practical training carried out later in separate professional schools. (1980, 185, 157) Likewise, since Anderson uses the terms 'liberal' and 'classical' interchangeably in his theory of education (for example, 1962, 189; 1980, 102–103), it is clear that *liberal education* and *vocational education* are in opposition. The same obviously applies to *education* and *work*. When the two are mixed, the practical end

> ... of taking one's place in the community, of securing more or less useful and remunerative occupation, overshadows critical thinking ... what ... is industry's gain is quite commonly education's loss. (Anderson 1960 in 1962, 191)

However I seriously question the relevance of the theory/practice, thinking/doing and education/work dichotomies (Hager 1990, 1994). A contrast is set up in which pure thought for its own sake is elevated over the performance of mindless practical tasks to earn a living. Competency-based training in its narrowest versions approximates the latter. However such dichotomies caricature both education and work. The skilled employment of reasoning is not restricted to the domain of pure theory. Nor is there any reason other than prejudice to think that reasoning as employed in the workplace is thereby second-rate. Many of Anderson's highly educated students ended up in very senior positions, so we can infer that their theoretical education prepared them well for work. However may not their reasoning capacities have been further developed as a direct result of being deployed in the workplace? Hence we can see that outcomes are typically cognitive as much as they are practical. For vocational courses, the vocation provides a set of contexts in which the generic competencies of the kind specified by Jackson are given substance. Since outcomes are typically cognitive as much as they are practical, they at least overlap with the domain of education even when it is viewed in a very traditional narrow sense.

A further version of the 'Outcomes as Practical' argument is the 'Outcomes as Useful' argument. Whitehead's response to this argument was:

> Pedants sneer at an education which is useful. But if education is not useful, what is it? (Whitehead 1950, 3)

Whitehead's point is entirely appropriate. As Blanshard stressed:

> ... liberal studies ... are enormously useful in three ways. First, they are useful directly because they satisfy some of the deepest wants in our nature. Secondly, they are useful indirectly through enabling us to borrow the best insights and standards of others. Thirdly, if taken seriously, they may permeate with their influence all our thought and feeling and action. (Blanshard 1974, 31)

The second and, especially, the third of these have significant vocational relevance. Overall, then, practicality and/or usefulness are not necessarily in conflict with outcomes that are educational.

3. The 'outcomes as limiting' argument

As Schipp pointed out above, one way in which the outcomes of education can be limited is the case where the teacher displays partisanship. In contrast, Schipp espouses 'objective, disinterested and critical' inquiry that focuses on 'the pursuit of knowledge and the processes which promote it; on the demands of the discipline itself; and ... the essential open-endedness of inquiry.' Once again, broad outcomes, such as those proposed by Candy, Crebert and O'Leary (1994), support just such processes. Hence there is nothing in the nature of outcomes themselves that are limiting. Of course, one can write narrow outcomes that are incompatible with education. But this only shows that not all outcomes are educationally acceptable. It says nothing about outcomes in general.

Conclusion

There is an emerging worldwide interest in generic outcomes for the various levels of education. While some educators hold that outcomes are inimical to genuine education, the case of liberal education shows that this conclusion is hasty. Taking liberal education as a paradigm of what is favoured by proponents of 'genuine education', this paper has assessed a range of arguments against generic outcomes and found them to be wanting. Overall then, it seems clear that outcomes in themselves are not necessarily educationally unsound. Thus, adult education, with its traditional strong focus on generic outcomes such as self-direction, learning from experience and reflection, can be seen more than ever to be a significant part of the educational enterprise.

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Crossing borders in research on adult continuing education in the European Union: pitfalls and prospects for a European forum

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The ongoing process of integration in the European Union [EU] provides growing possibilities for co-operation in adult continuing education [ACE] and potential opportunities for crossing borders in research within Europe. EU legislation and programmes exert growing influence in the member states, while EU programmes promote trans-national partnerships. Following the ratification of the Single European Act in 1986, the European Commission [EC] developed a number of mobility programmes, including ERASMUS for higher education, university-enterprise networks, and support for distance learning. Ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union in 1993 led to the development of EU policies and major programmes for general education (SOCRATES) and vocational training (LEONARDO), which increasingly impinge upon ACE. With the 1993 White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment, the 1995 White Paper on the learning society, and the European Year of Lifelong Learning in 1996, the EU has become one of the key players in promoting the reform and development of ACE in support of its policies for lifelong learning.

These developments increasingly impact upon research. The EC has commissioned a number of research reports, while SOCRATES, LEONARDO and the programme for Targeted Social-Economic Research [TSER] support trans-national research and development projects in ACE, surveys and studies of education and training, and the educational dimensions of social exclusion and cohesion. Open and distance learning, together with information technologies, are rapidly expanding fields for EU-funded research. Increasing opportunities for trans-national research projects, however, are associated with significant problems in establishing cross-border co-operation between researchers in different countries. Although the establishment in 1991 of the European Society for Research in the Education of Adults [ESREA] created a potential organisational basis for the European research forum, an ESREA study of university-based research on ACE concluded that cross-border co-operation was severely inhibited by an extremely diffuse forum. This paper examines some of the key pitfalls and prospects associated with the development of a European research forum.

An international research forum?

Since the Second World War there has been a cumulative process of the institutionalisation of the study of ACE at universities in North and South America, Africa, (Austral-) Asia, Western and Eastern Europe. This resulted in the establishment of dedicated departments, the appointment of academic staff, the provision of undergraduate and post-graduate teaching programmes, and the development of research. These developments could suggest that the material pre-conditions for an international forum have been achieved and that this forum communicates through the journals and conferences, such as this one, seminars and workshops at the national, regional and international levels. Such a view of the international forum is characterised by a dominant North Atlantic hegemony which is highly exclusive. It excludes in particular much of the scientific discourse — especially that conducted in other languages — in a culturally diverse Europe.

In this paper I explore four aspects of the construction of the scientific forum in Western Europe. Section one focuses on the 'institutional construction' of the forum in terms of the organisation of research in European universities. In section two attention turns to the 'social construction' of the forum as a process of communication between 'peers'. The 'intellectual construction' of the forum is addressed in section three, which looks at the theoretical and methodological perspectives within the forum. Section four examines the 'political economic (re-) construction' of the scientific forum.

Institutional construction of the forum

The research environment is highly pluralistic in all western European countries, and the university is not everywhere the major location for research on ACE. Furthermore, there is significant diversity in the organisation of the study of ACE within the universities. Institutionalisation is most obvious where 'dedicated departments' provide the organisational focus for research in the area of ACE. In this regard, there is a distinction between countries where a) the majority of universities have dedicated departments, such as Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Sweden, Finland, Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Ireland; b) there are few if any dedicated departments, as in Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey; and c) there are no dedicated departments and service departments for continuing professional education undertake research, as in France, Switzerland.

There is, furthermore, is significant variation in the location of research in the university environment. Such variations are related to national traditions for faculty structures, and the specific historical development of research in ACE. Dedicated departments are generally located within, or in close relationship to, departments of education or pedagogy within faculties of psychology or behavioural sciences. This can be partly understood in relation to the historically close disciplinary identity of the educational sciences with psychology as the parent discipline. The establishment of such dedicated departments become a more widespread pattern during the 1970s and 1980s. Where there are few if any dedicated departments this is partly related to the historical absence of institutionalised adult education. In Portugal and Spain, the area of continuing professional education currently forms an important base for the development of research. In France and the French-speaking cantons of Switzerland, these departments have long played a vital basis for the development of research activities which are attached to the appropriate faculties such as law, economics, sociology, medicine and engineering. The role of service departments for continuing professional education is a developing feature in a number of countries. Although France has more than 70 universities but there are no dedicated departments, each university is required to establish a service department for continuing professional education. In Finland, continuing education centres at the 20 Finnish universities have become involved in research, while in Switzerland the encouragement of continuing professional education is increasingly influential in the development of research. A similar development can even be registered in the United Kingdom where the extra-mural work of dedicated departments has been 'mainstreamed' and continuing professional education has gained in importance.

Research is also undertaken by other university departments. These include educational sciences, sociology and social policy, management and business administration, psychology, languages and linguistics, and economics. Furthermore, universities in a number of countries have established institutes for contract research. With the growing emphasis on lifelong learning and work-related aspects of ACE, many dedicated departments find themselves competing with others for funding. They are increasingly obliged to co-operate, cross traditional departmental boundaries and to forge new coalitions. This compounds the significant pluralisation of the institutional basis of the European forum which is manifested in the diverse composition of trans-national research teams submitting bids for European funding.

Social construction of the forum

An important indicator of a scientific forum is the existence of organisations which facilitate communication among the peers. In Western Europe there is a wide variety of such organisations. Firstly, there is a variety of European-level organisations in addition to ESREA, including the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction (EARLI), the European Association of Research and Development Institutes (EARDI), the European Universities Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) and the Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education in Europe (CIDREE). National organisations, secondly, include the adult education sections of the German and Portuguese societies for educational research, the Adult Education Research Society in Finland; and the Swiss Society for Research in Education. Thirdly, national organisations for ACE which hold research meetings include Grupo 90 in Spain, the Universities Council for Adult Continuing Education (UCAE) and SCUTREA in the United Kingdom. Finally, national networks in specific areas of research, include the Society for Research and Development of Popular Education in Denmark, the Congress for Current Research on Education and Training in France, and the Association for Educational Gerontology and the Society for Research on Higher Education in the United Kingdom. Mention should be made of the annual regional meeting of researchers in the Scandinavian countries.

These organisations are responsible for regular meetings of researchers which are important components in developing the forum at different levels. They play a vital role in creating a sense of identity among the potential forum in the European countries. Researchers enjoy, however, increasingly limited resources for attending research meetings. University funds are decreasing and additional funding has to be derived from contract research, funding councils, and foundations. National funding is also limited and subject to severe competition and this also applies to EU programmes which are increasingly important funding sources for crossing borders in research.

Europeanisation of the forum is restricted, furthermore, by inadequate dissemination and utilisation of research. Publications constitute the major channel for dissemination of research at the national and European levels mainly through the proceedings of scientific meetings, dissertations, journals, yearbooks, monographs and edited volumes. Few such publications are commercially viable and rarely appear in the collections of publishers. The exception is Germany where a number of commercial publishers have series of monographs and edited volumes. Most countries have at least one journal, although their number is clearly related to the degree of institutionalisation and the size of the research community. The largest number of dedicated journals is found in Finland, France, Germany, United Kingdom. These include those dedicated to ACE and related disciplinary fields such as educational sciences, psychology, sociology, history, industrial relations and labour market, cultural and media studies and management studies etc. At the European level, there are few publishing outlets for research in ACE. Significant is the absence of a dedicated European research journal for ACE, and efforts to Europeanise *Studies in the Education of Adults* have not been successful. The *Internationales Jahrbuch fur Erwachsenenbildung* is European in orientation but is dominated by German-language contributions.

Language remains the most vital problem in the development of a European forum. At the national level, language is unproblematic and dissemination takes place overwhelmingly in the vernacular. One exception is the Netherlands where researchers are required to publish in English for purposes of quantifying research output. Development of a European forum, however, is severely inhibited by the lack of active or passive command of other languages. There are still three quite distinct major language areas, using the English, French and German languages respectively, which still dominate communication within Europe. It is significant that it is very rare for French, German and United Kingdom researchers to publish in other languages, while French legislation even prohibits use of other languages. This contributes to three relatively closed and self-sufficient language-based communities which severely divide the European forum. In other countries the translation of research reports into English, French and German is seen as vital to any degree of successful participation in the European forum. English, moreover, is increasingly adopted for dissemination, which increases problems of co-operation with the distinct French and German research communities. This severely limits the expansion of border crossings and the integration of the European forum.

The intellectual construction of the forum

These complex and often divisive characteristics of the institutional and social construction of the forum are reflected in a variety of theoretical perspectives which characterise its intellectual construction. Rudimentary problems arise from national differences in the range of phenomena recognised as ACE. Successful co-operation is predicated upon efforts to capture the object of study, delineate its boundaries, and provide phenomena with a nomenclature.

There is consensus, however, that the variable phenomena recognised as ACE are 'out there in society' and that social sciences has to study, understand and explain these phenomena. European academics have in general distanced themselves from the fruitless debate about ACE as field of practice or a discipline. They overwhelmingly reject the 'epistemological error' that it is incorrect to seek the help of other disciplines in understanding ACE phenomena. This has stimulated engagement in epistemological questions concerning different disciplinary perspectives and their contribution to the body of knowledge about ACE.

This involves approaching ACE phenomena from the perspectives of the mono-disciplines such as psychology, sociology, philosophy, cultural anthropology, economics, political science or history etc. In France, for example, the mono-disciplines are still regarded as the legitimate sources of knowledge. Recent appointments to chairs in Germany, furthermore, suggest a significant shift from the normative philosophical tradition in *erwachsenenbildung* towards more discipline-oriented empirical research (Hake 1995). Reorganisations elsewhere also indicate that a rigorous disciplinary basis is vital to survival of research within universities. The European literature has in particular addressed relationships between the basic disciplines and 'epistemological vandalism' when these are applied without appropriate disciplinary rigour in ACE. Although psychology has traditionally provided the dominant disciplinary perspective, there has been a marked tendency in Europe to question the inadequacies of naive forms of dependence upon psychological theories of instruction, programme planning and adult learning. This has been concerned with the absence of an adequate conceptualisation of ACE phenomena in relation to their social context, and a significant trend has been an increasingly sophisticated sociological understanding of ACE.

The emphasis upon disciplinary rigour has not prevented the emergence of a trans-disciplinary approach in research. There has been a profound engagement in a critique of the positivist tradition and the exploration of, on the one hand, neo-Marxist conflict theory, and, on the other hand, the interpretative approach associated with ethnomethodology. The European tradition of hermeneutic and critical theory in the social sciences is also a significant feature in research. Currently there is an engagement with post-modernism, and the theories of Giddens, Bourdieu and Beck on globalisation, late modernity and risk society.

In a number of countries, the growing engagement of biographical and life-history research is an increasingly significant area of trans-disciplinary research. Feminist scholarship and women's studies is also regarded as a relevant trans-disciplinary area. Increasing importance of relationships between ACE and the world of work are giving rise to closer relations with other trans-disciplinary areas of study such as management studies and the organisational sciences. It is significant, moreover, that economics is regarded as an underdeveloped area of increasing importance. This suggests that priority is given to working out the trans-disciplinary nature of research on the basis of rigorous research with a sound disciplinary basis.

Much has still to be achieved in establishing the epistemological merits of disciplinary perspectives which can produce theoretically-informed empirical research. Recent contributions to the European literature have clearly indicated, however, the increasing sophistication of sound and coherent intellectual work among European academics which are based upon the successful crossing of disciplinary boundaries while maintaining disciplinary rigour. Construction of the intellectual forum is seriously hindered, however, by serious breaks in development caused by delayed translation of texts. The European forum has to organise regular exchange and mutual exploration of distinctive contributions.

Political economy of the forum

Problems surrounding the development of knowledge about ACE phenomena must also be related to why this knowledge is produced and who uses it. This raises questions of social interests and the problematic relationships between fundamental and applied research. Disciplines are not only involved in internal discussions about how knowledge should be produced, they are also asked questions by distinct audiences who wish to use knowledge to specific ends. Audiences range from policy-makers, employers, ACE providers, social movements and adult learners themselves.

Within traditional university systems, the choice of research topics was largely left to the personal interests of individual academics and success in securing support their work. This favoured the development of a pluralistic research culture. Theoretical and fundamental research has been carried out alongside a heady mixture of practice-related research in co-operation with organisations in the field by way of action and participatory research. ACE has undergone a metamorphosis, however, during the transition from its origins in social movements, through its recognition as a public service, towards its current status as a market-place for educational products and potential consumers. Rather than unquestioningly serving this transition, one of the tasks of research is to arrive at theoretically informed understandings of this profound transition.

The university-based research environment is increasingly challenged where European and national research programmes with specific priorities have become significant in determining the allocation of research funding. Given the growing amount of contract research for third parties within the total research budget in most countries and at European level, there is a general move towards the predominance of applied research. Given the increasing priority of vocational training in public policy, it is necessary to examine very closely the possible conflicts between discipline-based fundamental research and policy-related applied research. This is important since governments, and the EU, are the main financiers and users of research. During the last ten years an increasing amount of decision-oriented research in ACE has been carried out by para-university institutes and commercial firms. These organisations have little affinity with the tradition of research on ACE. Research workers very diverse backgrounds are hired on short-term contracts, which results in a great number of transitions into and out of decision-oriented research. This results in a failure to build upon the body of disciplinary-based knowledge, while there is a peculiar poverty of theory in much applied research. As many studies commissioned by the EU all too clearly illustrate, much policy-related research is characterised by theoretical poverty and methodological illiteracy. Much is a-theoretical, inept in terms of research methods, and definitions of research problems are unquestioningly administrative in tone. This works in the longer term against the development of a sustained development of theory and a body of knowledge.

ESREA has from the start committed itself to the need to support the development of high quality fundamental research with a firm foundation in the disciplinary-based development of a body of knowledge. This has provided the basis for the creation of a number of European research networks by ESREA, which bring together researchers on the basis of their own ongoing research with national research funding. There is no necessary conflict here with active participation in trans-national research projects funded by the EU. It is significant that a number of ESREA-based consortiums are now competing for European funding which could provide a sound basis for the development of a theoretically informed contribution to applied research.

Conclusions

A research forum in ACE does not exist because there are numerous university departments carrying a particular title, or its equivalent. Throughout Europe, there remain very significant differences with regard to distinctive academic cultures and the traditions of university involvement in the disparate and shifting field of institutions and practices recognised as constituting ACE. These differences in tradition not only have important implications for the organisation and the tasks of university departments within each country. They are of fundamental significance when we attempt to secure greater co-operation within Europe. The forum may be well organised in some countries, and in the

Scandinavian countries at a regional level, and these communicative networks link researchers in common research endeavours, organise regular meetings, and produce their journals and other publications. In other countries and at the European level, however, we still have to take account of a poorly organised and diffuse scientific forum.

A European forum cannot be identified, furthermore, in terms of any clear-cut consensus about what ACE 'is'. While there is obviously a domain of adult learning out there in European society, the potential members of a European forum obviously still have major problems in defining it. Furthermore, the potential forum experiences problems in establishing the nature of its own distinctive theories in relation to other social science disciplines. Historically, and in the present, disciplinary pluralism in approaches to understanding ACE phenomena has to be recognised. Disciplines such as psychology, sociology, philosophy and history, to name a few, will continue to contribute the firmest theoretical foundations for empirical research. It is necessary, however, to continue probing much deeper into the many unanswered questions concerning the pluralistic disciplinary foundations of research, and to become aware of and able to take account of significant variations in the disciplinary foundations of research in different European countries.

Overcoming the lack of knowledge of different traditions and perspectives in Europe is bedevilled, furthermore, by the existence of three mutually exclusive language-based forums which utilise the English, French and German languages. Despite the success of ESREA in encouraging increased crossing of borders in European co-operation, ESREA has not been able as yet to break through this fundamental barrier to communication in a united European forum. This a major priority in the future of European co-operation in ACE which has to be addressed by on a broader front than the small minority of European-minded activists in cross-border research (Field 1997).

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Borders crossed, boundaries to break: refugee participation in further and higher education in Sydney

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This paper is based upon a study into participation in further and higher education by adult refugees in the Sydney metropolitan area, which has the largest refugee population in Australia. Conducted during a three-month period in late 1996, it sought to identify examples of good practice which are potentially transferable to the UK and other major host countries for refugees.

A variety of published official, academic and other documents were consulted, but the most important source of information was the direct experience shared during interviews. These were conducted with relevant personnel from all of Sydney's six universities, the Training and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, the Adult Migrant English Service (AMES), the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS), Asylum Seekers, the Refugee Council of Australia, the Australian Committee on Refugee Women (ANCRW), ethno-specific refugee organisations and welfare groups and Migrant Resource Centres (MRCs). Interviews were also conducted with refugee students from Iraq, Bosnia, Romania, Afghanistan, Burundi, Russia, Vietnam, East Timor, China, Lebanon and El Salvador.

There are, of course, many providers of education to adult refugees, both formal and non-formal. However, in view of time and resource constraints, the study focused on further and higher education. The following key issues relating to the education of adult refugees in further and higher education are addressed in this paper:

- the significance of access to further and higher education for refugees
- how does the experience of a refugee background impact upon the desire and ability to study?
- how effective are existing sources of information and advice
- to what extent are educational providers aware of, and sensitive to, the needs of their refugee-background students?

The significance of access to further and higher education by refugees

The study is inspired by the belief that participation in further and higher education can play a crucial role in ensuring that refugees maximise their potential. For refugees who seek temporary protection, it can provide access to a constructive and practical period of exile. For those who are adjusting to permanent citizenship in the host country, it can help facilitate resettlement and realise opportunities. (Dodds 1985, GEAR 1986) However, adult refugees face considerable barriers in accessing further and higher education, and can experience significant problems during their studies. Whilst some of these problems are common amongst other students such as mature entrants and those for whom the language of study is not their first language, refugees are likely to experience additional difficulties as a result of their often traumatic expatriation.

Factors influencing the desire and ability to study

In some cases, the pre-arrival experience of a refugee will have been so traumatic that work or study is out of the question and a lengthy period of rehabilitation involving medical care and counselling may be necessary. All new arrivals will require a period of time in which to re-orientate to the new society and culture, and 'grieve' for the pre-refuge life which has been left behind, perhaps for ever. Some time may elapse before refugee and humanitarian entrants are in a position to seek employment or further study, particularly if they are suffering from physical or psychological problems. Various studies of refugee resettlement substantiate this (Refugee Resettlement Working Group 1993, Reid and Strong 1987).

Practical impediments to further study in further (and more particularly) higher education include disrupted schooling, destroyed or inaccessible certificates and other documents, non-transferable qualifications and lack of money. After enrolling on a course, the refugee may suffer from the after-effects of torture or trauma, with physical and psychological symptoms disrupting their ability to concentrate and study:

> There is ample evidence that exposure to such traumatic events as those experienced by most refugees are often associated with a number of psychological sequelae. These may include depression, feelings of guilt, loss of self esteem, anxiety, sleep disorders, intrusive thoughts and flashbacks, memory and concentration problems, difficulties in social functioning, marital and family disruption. (Arroche 1994, 1)

The educational advisor with the Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors (STARTTS) cited examples of clients who had been successful in entering college and university, but were unable to complete their courses as a result of these psychological problems. As discussed below, the counselling and other support services available within an institution may not be sufficient to deal with these: students may need the support of a specialist agency such as

STARTTS. It may also be argued that any refugee suffering from such severe problems is not yet ready to embark on a demanding course of study. However, it could also be argued that involvement in a course of study could help facilitate the healing process by providing purpose and distraction. Circumstances do, of course, vary between individuals and there is probably no single answer.

Refugee caseworkers reported that those arriving from refugee camps seemed to be particularly demotivated on arrival, and generally showed little interest in pursuing their education. Generally, this may be true, but it was certainly not the case for one Iraqi and one Vietnamese refugee interviewed for this study. The Vietnamese man sought information about education shortly after arrival, whilst the Iraqi reported that 'from the day I arrived in Australia, I wanted to apply to university'. A medical student in Iraq before being imprisoned for his opposition to Saddam Hussein, then conscripted into the army during the Gulf war before deserting and fleeing to the Rafha refugee camp in Saudia Arabia, he recounted his attempts to study during his four-year stay in the Rafha camp:

> I studied business administration in the technical college for one semester. I was not interested in the subject, but was keen to study and that was all that was on offer. The style of teaching was very different to that here (in Australia); the lecturer wrote on the board and the student copied. You weren't expected (or able) to do any research. Then the college in Rafha was discontinued because of a riot.

This man had already spent A$1,000 travelling to Tasmania to sit university entry tests for medicine and pharmacy. He was unaware of the special entry schemes and had therefore applied, unsuccessfully, through the regular channels.

In common with the population in general, it is probably true that refugees are more likely to be interested in applying for further and higher education if they come from middle-class backgrounds, in particular from cities. A caseworker with the Bosnian refugee community reported that, in his experience, the major factor determining the decision about whether to enter further or higher education was whether the refugee had come from the country or a city. Those from the smaller villages were generally less well-educated that those from the big cities, and the latter were therefore more likely to enter post-compulsory education. A caseworker with the Jewish community reported a similar urban/rural divide, stating that those arriving from the cities were generally well-educated professionals.

A major difficulty commonly experienced by the refugees interviewed was the absence of a single source of comprehensive information and impartial advice about further and higher education opportunities.

Sources of information and advice

The range of courses offered by the universities and Training and Further Education (TAFE) sector is vast and constantly-changing. Entry routes and requirements can be complex. Without exception, the refugee support workers interviewed stated that they felt ill-equipped to provide advice, and believed that refugees were disadvantaged by the absence of an appropriate source of information and guidance which was general and impartial. In interviews with individual refugees, this absence was repeatedly stated. A significant number had personal stories of how they had been poorly advised, resulting either in failure to gain access to a course or enrolling on an inappropriate course.

Potential applicants to the TAFE sector have access to specialist course advisors, but those interviewed who had experience of using this facility had mixed reports. One Vietnamese refugee stated that he had been advised to join a course in which he had no interest, and believed that this was because the advisor did not herself understand what the course was about, but since it was an unpopular course which did not recruit well, steered him towards it.

In cases where colleges and university departments had been approached directly for advice, the general experience seemed to be that the encouragement received was directly related to the prestige of the institution and the level of popularity of the subject area in which the enquirer was interested. Enquiries to highly popular and heavily over-subscribed courses such as medicine and law, it was reported, were coolly received. In contrast, enquiries to less popular courses in less prestigious universities were more warmly received. This may have been a coincidence in view of the very small sample on which this study is based, but it may be true. As one refugee remarked 'when these courses can have their pick of the brightest school-leavers, why should they give places to mature students and refugees who are likely to have lots more problems'.

Inappropriate guidance can have negative consequences not only for the individual, but also for the institution. If a student is unhappy, under-performing or drops out, it reflects badly on both. However, the extent to which the refugees interviewed in this study were particularly tenacious in completing unsatisfactory courses was quite striking. In one example, a Russian woman refugee misunderstood a discussion with a caseworker, and believed that she was going for an interview for a job when she turned up at a Sydney university. She left having enrolled for a course in environmental science. She explained that the course was extremely difficult and suffered from a high drop-out rate with 130 students enrolling initially, but only 56 completing. She finished and gained her degree, believing that it would reflect badly on her if she dropped out of university. 'It was important to me to prove that I was willing to work hard in Australia, that I was prepared to accept hardship and make a go of it'.

Interviews with refugees, caseworkers and college and university personnel all confirmed fairly common experiences with the manner in which refugees selected the courses for which they applied. Rather than be based entirely on personal preference, there seemed to be a tendency to apply for courses which:

- were local to home
- were already attended by relatives or friends from the same community
- had relatively low entrance requirements.

The STARRTS education advisor commented that, in her experience, many refugees applied for courses in community and social work 'because they feel they owe something to the world and want to help people like they've been helped'. She cited the example of a young Bosnian woman who had been studying physics in Bosnia, but chose to study social work when she arrived in Sydney. In reality, the selection of a course is probably influenced by a complex interplay of factors, but these general characteristics were in evidence. The Vietnamese worker also made the interesting point that the increasing emphasis on communication skills in certain professional courses such as medicine could be discouraging applicants from non-English speaking backgrounds.

When asked to suggest ways in which access to advice and guidance could be improved, a common suggestion was the establishment of a central advice centre which provided impartial information and guidance about all the study opportunities available in post-compulsory education. This, they believed, would help to overcome the distortions caused by the aggressive marketing of some courses and institutions, and the unwelcoming, elitist tone of others. An independent advisor could act as an honest broker, genuinely steering applicants towards the most appropriate courses for their interests and circumstances.

Institutional awareness and sensitivity

Further and higher education institutions generally adopt the Australian government's position that, once refugees became Australian citizens, they have the same entitlements and would be treated the same as all other citizens. As a result, there are no official statistical records kept which indicate the extent to which refugees are successfully accessing health, jobs, education and social services. Colleges and universities do not keep records of how many entrants are from refugee backgrounds. Consequently, their needs are not addressed as a group. Instead, access to support services such as counselling, study skills or language teaching would be identified on an individual needs basis, similar to any other student. Whilst this position clearly has some merit, it also results in an absence of any acknowledgement of the specific problems which refugee background students may face. In the words of one Bosnian refugee: 'treating everyone the same can be discriminatory'. The barriers to successful study which refugees might face have already been discussed, and whilst it is true that some problems such as panic attacks and difficulty with concentrating might affect non-refugee students, the probability of them occurring in students from refugee backgrounds is higher.

If institutions were at least officially aware of the fact that a student had a refugee background, they could, with the agreement of the student, alert the appropriate staff from the beginning of the student's course. This could help to identify any problems early, steering the student towards appropriate sources of help and support. In particular, it is important that such students should be allocated a personal tutor who is knowledgeable about, and sympathetic to, the particular plight of refugees.

A counsellor employed by one of the Sydney universities reported that she 'regularly' counselled students from refugee backgrounds. By the time she saw them, however, their problems were often quite serious. Occasionally, and with the students' permission, she would contact tutors on their behalf, with a view to renegotiating deadlines or requesting other action to ameliorate their practical difficulties. She was surprised at how often key personnel in the student's department were unaware that the student had a refugee background, and found that they were generally sympathetic to her suggestions when informed.

A high proportion of the refugee students interviewed were unsure about the extent to which they were eligible to use study skills and English language support services. Some believed that these, particularly the English language service, were for registered overseas students only. As they were classified as 'home-based' students, they thought they didn't qualify. As a general rule, those who had been longest in Australia appeared more likely to approach these services for assistance when they thought it necessary. All who had used these services believed that they were inadequate to meet their needs. Whilst classes in, for example, academic writing could be useful, they needed to be supplemented with more personalised tuition delivered on a one-to-one basis. The extent to which this was available was inconsistent and unpredictable and, of course, determined by the personnel and other resources available.

Difficulties with academic English and writing style are common amongst students educated in non-

English speaking countries generally, particularly those from a very different academic tradition. It would therefore seem to be in the interests of all institutions keen to recruit more overseas students to offer more personalised support services.

Applicants from refugee backgrounds are often unable to present official documents confirming their previous education experience and qualifications. In the TAFE sector, applicants for trade-based courses such as car mechanics or plumbing are asked to take a test. Candidates may also be asked to prepare a portfolio describing what they did in the past. Applicants to universities who find themselves in this situation are commonly asked for a sworn statement. If the level of qualification claimed is recognised for entry purposes, the candidate may be invited to interview, or to sit an exam or otherwise make a presentation of his or her work.

In reality, it would appear that the admissions tutors and Heads of Department have a considerable degree of influence in deciding whether a candidate in these circumstances is accepted. Refugees interviewed spoke of the importance of having 'contacts' in the department or university who could lobby on their behalf. In one situation, two Bosnian refugees had sufficiently impressed a Head of Department at a social event that he expedited their application to study in his Faculty. Overall, there was an impression amongst the refugees interviewed that individual cases were being approached 'flexibly' according to the prejudices of those with authority to make decisions.

Conclusion and recommendations

This study set out to examine the participation of refugees in further and higher education in the Sydney metropolitan area, with a view to identifying examples of transferable good practice which could be applied in the UK and elsewhere. It did not find any 'official' government or institutional policies towards refugees in further and higher education, and whilst institution-based examples of effective guidance and support were identified, these were delivered through student support services or provided informally by sympathetic members of (generally academic) staff.

There were not, therefore examples of formal, institutionalised good practice to be picked off the shelf, but those interviewed for this study themselves suggested more formal policies and practice which they would like to see adopted. These would appear equally practicable in both Australia and the UK, and indeed elsewhere. As well as meeting the needs of refugees, some of these suggestions could also be of benefit to overseas students from non-English speaking backgrounds. Most would require only minor modifications to existing procedures, and relatively small financial commitment. They can be summarised as follows:

1. specific statistical data be systematically gathered concerning the number of applications, success rate, courses studied and completion rates of students from refugee backgrounds.
2. institutions become proactive in distributing information about non-traditional entry routes to refugee community groups and migrant resource centres.
3. a 'one-stop shop' offering advice and information about opportunities for study in further and higher education be established, offering free and impartial advice and guidance.
4. more 'bridging' and 'taster' courses targeting specific refugee communities be offered through college and university outreach programmes.
5. institutions offer more 'cultural sensitivity' training to staff, including the particular plight of refugees, and to consider making such training compulsory.
6. the criteria and procedures for assessing applicants' previous experience and learning (PEL) be made explicit and open, reducing the degree of personal discretion exercised by admissions tutors and Heads of Department.
7. with the student's agreement, relevant staff should be informed from the outset about a student's refugee background. Particular care should be taken to appoint a personal tutor sympathetic to their needs.
8. students from refugee backgrounds should be able to access all of the support services available to overseas students and that they should be informed of this from the outset. Such services should, as far as possible, be provided on a one-to-one basis.

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Examining borders and boundaries: mentors and situated learning in academic culture

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Because academic life frequently takes adult doctoral and graduate students outside the familiar meaning systems and cultures of their everyday lives, these adult learners struggling to learn the culture of Academe find themselves in situations where usual ways of making meaning, interpreting the world, and acting upon these interpretations are not reliable. In many ways, they become what Stalker (1993) calls 'the other', or outsiders in academic culture. Mentoring relationships and their usefulness in helping adult learners enter a new culture has been a reoccurring theme in adult education literature in recent years. Daloz (1986) proposes that mentors may act as 'interpreters of the environment' (p. 207) or culture for adult learners. Caffarella defines mentoring relationships as 'intense caring relationships in which persons with more experience work with less experienced persons to promote both professional and personal development' (Caffarelia 1992, 38). Cohen (1995) takes a more technical view of mentors by listing six roles he contends mentors may fulfil: establishing trusting relationships, offering advice, introducing alternatives, challenging, motivating, and encouraging initiatives. For women, minorities, and others who are new to the academic environment or culture in universities, mentors who fulfil the roles proposed by Cohen may allow these adult learners to cross borders between their everyday and academic lives and transcend boundaries, both perceived and unknown, which confront them in universities. However, women and minority doctoral students may face difficulties finding and forming helpful mentoring relationships, particularly in an academic culture traditionally dominated and defined by white males. The problem these learners face is how to learn to function within the academic culture and make meaning out of their new lives in the university, either with or without mentors.

Proponents of situated cognition (Lave and Wenger 1991, Wilson 1993) describe learning and cognition as being fundamentally situated, with 'cognition ... distributed among people acting in a culturally organised setting' (Wilson 1993, 337). Situated cognition suggests that learning is inherently social - rooted in learners' participation in communities of practice as they move from peripheral toward full participation. The academic culture viewed from this perspective becomes a community of practice, where doctoral students may or may not have opportunities to participate in peripheral and full academic culture. Collins, Brown and Newman (1989) describe learning as taking place through observation and imitation of models; in academic culture, these models could be mentors helping mentees learn the culture. But how do mentors help women participate in academic culture and make meaning out of their new lives in the university? What borders and boundaries do women doctoral students encounter in academic life? How do women doctoral students perceive academic communities as inherently reproducing the white male power structure of academic life already in place? The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore these questions and examine the mentoring relationships described by eight women doctoral students and first year women professors from a situated perspective, probing these mentoring relationships and the barriers and boundaries present, and at times transcended, with or without help from mentors.

Review of the literature

Mentoring

Cohen (1995) takes a 'behavioural view' of mentoring relationships, describing mentoring as 'the one-to-one relationship that evolves through reasonably distinct phases between the mentor and the adult learner' (p. 2). Cohen characterises mentoring as a changing and interactive process which evolves through set phases: the early phase, in which foundations of trust are established; the middle phase, where mentors help mentees establish goals; the later phase, where mentors 'facilitate interaction' (p. 16) to explore the mentees' interests, beliefs, and reasons for decisions; and the final phase, where mentors function as models who challenge mentees to reflect upon their goals and pursue challenges. Cohen's model is a technical prescription for mentoring, and he assumes that all mentors will be willing to invest the time and effort to take all the steps he describes to develop mentoring relationships. In addition, even though he cautions mentors to be aware of 'stereotyping' students based on gender, race or class, he presumes that *professors* and others *in* academic culture are willing to mentor those who view themselves as 'other' in the academic culture, such as women and ethnic minorities.

Since much of the research on mentoring to date is based on male-male relationships, the gender of both the mentor and mentee has not been an important factor in many of the studies (Stalker 1994, 1996). Carden (1990) questions contemporary notions of mentoring, asking whether mentoring 'sanctions an elitist patron system that excludes the socially different .... and maintains a status quo based on accumulation of advantage and replication of exploitative hierarchical systems' (p. 276). Stalker (1994) critiques mentoring from a feminist viewpoint, noting that traditional research studies concerning mentoring are androcentric, thus problems inherent with men mentoring females are not discussed in much of the adult education literature concerning mentoring. Collard and Stalker (1991) assert that higher education provides a 'chilly' environment for women, and other studies (Prince 1991, Capian 1994, Hansman-Ferguson and Garofolo 1995) show that women in Academe are often unfamiliar with the academic environment or culture. The environment may be chilly, but women and minorities involved in graduate and doctoral programmes who aspire to careers in Academe learn to accommodate and function in the culture of higher education to be successful (Stalker 1996, Hansman-Ferguson and Garofolo, 1995).

Situated cognition and culture

Lave and Wenger (1991) view learning as essentially the process by which newcomers become a part of a *community* of practice. *Learning* a new culture from a situated view is not only thinking about the new culture, but thinking, talking and caring about it in new ways that are modelled by members of the community of practice one is in the process of entering (Collins, Brown and Newman 1989, Lave and Wenger 1991). 'Legitimate peripheral participation' (Lave and Wenger 1991, 29) describes the relationships between newcomers and persons already active within a culture, where 'the meaning of learning is configured through a process of becoming a full participant in a sociocultural practice' (Lave and Wenger 1991, 29), essentially through apprenticeships with experienced members of the culture. Mentoring relationships between professors and doctoral students may be apprenticeships in Academe. Thus learning the culture is not a thinking process, but occurs at the intersection of culture and activity. Heaney (1995) expands this idea further, contending that learners are engaged in a process of 'absorbing and being absorbed in the culture of practice while at the same time acquiring both the competence and will to share in decisions which define that culture' (p. 148). From this perspective, learners are therefore not only constituents of the culture, but are instrumental in also shaping the culture.

Viewing academic culture this way allows an examination of not only who has the power to participate within the academic culture but also the power to make decisions that form the culture. In higher education in the United States, white males have traditionally defined the culture within which doctoral students of varied ethnic backgrounds or genders participate. As more women and minorities enter doctoral programmes, they enter into the culture in Academe that traditionally they have not had any part in shaping. Mentors, as Daloz (1986) proposes, may light the way for these newcomers to Academe and help them interpret the culture, but not all mentors fulfil this charge. This qualitative study explores the mentoring relationships described by eight women doctoral students and first year women professors from a situated perspective, probing the culture within which these mentoring relationships were formed and the barriers and boundaries present within the academic culture from these women's perspectives. By examining the meaning these women made from their experiences in academic culture, it is possible to comprehend the boundaries in place to women and minorities and the power relationships that hold these barriers and limit access to full participation in academic culture.

Methodology

The author utilised a qualitative research design to listen to participants' stories while gaining an understanding of how they made meaning out of their experiences within the academic culture as women doctoral students. Eight women were interviewed, including the author. Three of the participants were African American; the rest of the respondents were White Americans. Six of the women were recent graduates of doctoral degree programmes in both the midwestern and southern portions of the United States and were beginning their second year as professors at two different southern universities in the United States. Two of the women were writing their dissertations as they were interviewed. The doctoral degrees the women earned or were in the process of earning were in Adult Education, Special Education, Curriculum Studies, and Community Health Education. All the women professors spoke about their experiences in academic culture in both their doctoral studies and their first years as professors; the graduate student participants, naturally, only reported about their experiences in their graduate programmes.

At the beginning of all the interviews, the author read the participants Caffarella's (1993) definition of mentoring to orient them to a common concept of mentoring. Although an interview guide provided some direction, interviews were unstructured. Data were transcribed from recordings and notes, and the interviews were analysed for emerging themes. In several instances, the author returned to participants to check understanding and meaning of information as themes emerged. A cross-case analysis was used to group answers from interviews (Patton 1990), and a constant-comparative method of data analysis was used to check emerging themes (Glaser and Strauss 1967).

Findings

It is important to note that since the participants completed doctorates at different universities, their experiences were varied, although commonalties emerged from the data. First, all the women participants in this study consciously sought out mentors to help understand the culture of higher education by 'positioning' themselves for mentoring relationships with either male or female professors. The gender of the mentor seemed to influence the depth and the degree of helpfulness of these relationships. Second, all the mentors, whether male or female, translated the culture of Academe for their mentees and engaged their mentees in activities designed to prepare them for professorships, although women mentors provided more opportunities for these activities. Finally, although women crossed boundaries allowing them to participate in academic culture, barriers that kept them from full participation (Heaney 1995) were still perceived by and present to these women.

Positioning

All the participants possessed enough self-knowledge and personal agency about themselves as learners of new cultures to 'position' themselves with mentors. These positional relationships were characterised by participants seeking out a mentor who seemed cognisant of power relationships and knowledge in Academe that the participants knew they lacked, knowledge that was shaped by the culture of the university setting.

Three of the women knew either male or female professors in their doctoral programmes before they started the programme; in these instances, the women 'fell' into the mentoring relationships. Some of the other mentoring relationships began when participants signed up for classes with potential mentors. Other women in the study served as doctoral assistants to their mentors or worked with their mentors on presentations and publications. What was characteristic about all these relationships, however, was that the participants 'asked' to work with their mentors; they were not invited to be mentees. Male and female mentors described by the participants did not follow a technical model for mentoring, such as the one proposed by Cohen (1996). Instead, the mentoring relationships were constructed through social interactions with the mentor within the academic culture, dependent on time constraints and social roles.

Translators of the academic culture

All the African American participants found African American female mentors. Only two of the White participants in this study were mentored by women professors. Both African American and White participants with female mentors also asked male professors to be their mentors, explaining that 'it is a male culture' and they felt they needed a 'male perspective' to help them succeed in the academic culture. Female mentors, however, frequently 'translated' or explained what male mentors told mentees as in the following example:

> He assumed I knew things - she translated what he said. For instance, he would tell me to submit a paper for publication. I didn't know how to do that. She would say 'go to the library, get back issues of the journal, have them fax you the publication guidelines, then write to the guidelines and send it in'.

Women mentors provided practical advice to their mentees concerning living and working in the academic culture, explaining potential pitfalls in the culture to them. Women mentors offered advice such as 'don't smile in committee meetings, because men will think you are saying yes to whatever changes they suggested in your dissertation'. Women mentors, more so than male mentors, 'did not just tell but showed' mentees how to become professors by including them in the research for and writing of grants, presentations and publications. In this way, they felt their mentors had translated the expectations of academic culture into the activity they needed to do to become a professor and have a future in Academe. In a telling remark, one woman said:

> I remember what it was like to be a woman student versus a male student. Now I feel like a male student because of the mentoring I get from my mentor.

Not all the mentoring relationships initiated by African American participants were positive experiences. One woman's white male mentor was supportive, but she did not 'connect with him' as she did her female mentor. She also felt he mentored her out of 'white male guilt', thus she turned to her female mentor for explanations of the academic culture. Another African American woman spoke of initiating an unsuccessful mentoring relationship with her major professor, a white male:

> I was his first doc student and I thought he would take me under his wings and shape me. But it really didn't happen - I had to encourage a lot of our relationship. Yet I watched him form other mentoring relationships with a white male - they were buddies - two white guys who shared ideas - and female students, which were productive.

Not all the participants chose women professors as mentors. One woman consciously selected two male professors to be her mentors because she felt they knew the 'field and the national scene' and could provide her with the type of help she needed to succeed. She deliberately chose men as mentors because 'men in the department had cut and dried relationships, and they tended to be more productive'. Other participants had no female mentors, largely because there were no women professors in their subject areas. Their male mentors were helpful, but none of these three participants spoke of mentoring relationships that achieved the depth of the other participants' descriptions of their relationships with women professors. Male mentors were not as forthcoming with invitations to present and publish or otherwise prepare mentees for an academic career.

Boundaries and barriers

The participants were cognisant that they were within a culture dominated by 'paternalistic good old boys'. One woman described the adversarial classrooms typically run by the male professors as 'phallic fencing', where male students used their 'knowledge of classroom readings as power'. This was very different from descriptions of some women professors' classrooms, where the 'whole notion of connecting with a reading and taking ownership of it and relating it to your own personal experiences' was stressed. A few of the women who were engaged in research which challenged dominant views of gender, race or class 'hid' their research agendas from their departments and male professors because it would not be seen as 'real' research. They felt intimidated around 'guys in the programme who were writing very traditional theoretical papers' which was viewed by male professors as 'real research'. In some instances, the women mentors helped their mentees avoid conflict with male members of the department by co-authoring papers with them around their gendered research interests.

Other barriers women mentioned were personal, concerning role conflicts between their home and family lives and academic culture. Four of the women spoke about family problems and feelings of 'short-changing' their children during their doctoral work. Of the eight women in the study, two of the women divorced within two years of completing their doctoral degree, and three of the other women spoke of unresolved problems in marriages or relationships that they related to their time in school for their doctoral degrees. Most of the women who shared their personal stories shielded or concealed these problems from others in Academe; to announce problems would cause the perception of them as a 'stereotypical woman' in a 'man's world'.

Discussion

Women compose more than half of university students in the United States and Canada, yet only account for ten percent of full professors in Academe in these countries (Kaplan 1994). As Stalker (1996) has observed, women are both insiders in Academe, participating in 'privileged' discourse, yet at the same time are 'other' because of research interests, interpretations of culture, and stereotypical roles and expectations. Findings from this study indicate that the mentors, especially women mentors, translated the culture for mentees and included them in the 'activities', such as writing for publications, which could help them succeed in Academe. By choosing white male mentors along with female mentors to help them enter a 'cultural meaning system' (Wilson 1993, 377), participants in this study acknowledged the power white male professors control in shaping Academe. Since six of the women in this study have successfully completed doctoral degrees and are new professors at universities, it is obvious that the participants were successful in achieving membership in Academe. However, the participants and their women mentors did not seem to be 'full participants in a socio-cultural practice' (Lave and Wenger 1991, 29) while actively participating in shaping that culture. Instead, they learned how to conform to the culture, to hide their 'otherness', and to adopt the standards of Academe in order to succeed.

Jacobson (1996) suggests that situated cognition may provide a way of talking and thinking about learning that is not determined by individual learners but by the learners being allowed to participate in communities and cultures; however, as findings from this study show, not all learners are allowed access to these communities equally. This study points out the problems inherent to women and minorities in becoming peripheral and full members of the academic culture. As Stalker (1996) concludes in her study of women mentors, women are not merely passive recipients of the academic culture; however, their ability to change the patriarchal culture of Academe is questionable. Through exposing whose interests in relation to power, knowledge and identity are primarily being served in academic culture, women, minorities and others may become agents of shaping the culture in the future (Luke 1995).

Although this study examined a limited number of academic cultures and women doctoral students in the United States, it is important to the field of adult education because it suggests a way of viewing learning and academic culture as a product of social construction, pointing out the barriers and boundaries which adult learners must cross to become a part of any learning community or culture. Since learning and knowledge are thus revealed as being the product of socially constructed relationships, issues of knowledge and power, which dominate academic life and all areas of adult education, become clearer.

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The practice of guidance in an employee development programme: crossing borders or blurring meanings?

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This paper will examine some of the tensions and ambiguities which emerge when the practices of educational guidance are displaced from the context in which they were developed, formal education, and introduced into a different context, that of an Employee Development Programme (EDP). To what extent are the values and principles which inform guidance practice constrained and altered by this transition? Placing this question within the theme of the conference: are we witnessing an extension of the progressive practices of guidance across the boundary between education and business, or the incorporation of these practices within the more coercive regime of labour management?

The paper is based on research undertaken by the author into the place and role of educational guidance within a particular EDP (Harrison 1997). The fieldwork for the study took place during the summer of 1996, focusing on a large industrial employer which has been running an EDP for three years. The employer is not identified by name, and will be referred to as 'the Company'. The programme is run from within the Company by an office which provides advice and guidance, as well as procuring learning opportunities in the form of computer-based self instructional packages, and tutor led courses. This office is referred to as 'the Centre'. The research consisted of analysis of documentary material provided by the Company, together with semi-structured, recorded interviews with Centre staff, employee-participants, and one member of the Steering Group who was external to the Company.

The paper will first contextualise EDPs, locating them within a wider discourse of lifelong learning; briefly describe the programme which provides the subject for this study, and then draw on material from the research to illustrate how current notions of guidance come under pressure when operating within this context.

Employee development programmes

Over the past decade there has been a growing interest in the concept of work-based EDPs, especially among large employers. Their broad aims have been defined as:

> to encourage a wider learning culture within organisations, a culture which goes well beyond the provision of job-related training and the training plans of companies.(Corney 1995)

They have been associated with an approach to human resource management which views employees as an investment rather than a cost (Payne 1996). The development of a learning culture within the private sector organisation then becomes part of a business strategy, linked with greater productivity and profitability.

> These initiatives (EDPs) are not simply benevolent gestures but sound business strategies to help to develop a workforce able and willing to respond to change, and capable of adapting and learning, rather than being limited by the boundaries of existing skills. (Metcalf 1992 ,vol 1, Introduction.)

EDPs are presented as a deliberate move away from a traditional approach to training, characterised as narrowly instrumental and management led, towards a more broadly based, negotiated and person-centred approach, with the aim of promoting individual personal development as part of company culture (Metcalf 1992. Forrester *et al.* 1995, Payne 1996). They sit comfortably within the rhetoric of the 'learning organisation', in which individual learning is presented as a key strategy for managing change in a market economy where change is characterised as rapid and unpredictable (Pedler *et al.* 1991, Dixon 1994, Argyris and Schön 1978). The notion of training, conceived narrowly as an activity initiated by managers with the aim of increasing efficiency within current structures, is displaced by the notion of learning, conceived as an activity initiated by individual workers which becomes the means by which the organisation 'continuously transforms itself' (Pedler *et al.* 1991, 2). Within this discourse new roles and subject positions are established, with individual workers being constituted as autonomous, enterprising learners, responsible for seeking out education and training opportunities. For instance:

> The CBI's vision is of individuals who are motivated to learn through life and who take responsibility for their own development. (CBI, 1994, 27)

Guidance becomes a central feature of this vision as individual learners seek to exercise their individual choices, furthering their own personal development at the same time as contributing to the efficiency of the company and the economy.

The subject of study.

The EDP which is the subject of the research is run from a Centre which provides a guidance service and procures a range of courses, both open learning packages and tutor led courses. It is separate from mainstream Company training, and has its own funding. Its origins lie with the 'Gateways to Learning' programme promoted by the Employment Department during the early 1990s.

The programme aimed to introduce individual guidance into workplace settings. In order to gain matching funding for its first year of operation the EDP had to conform to the specification of a 'Gateways' service as defined by the Employment Department, which specified, among other things, that it should:

- provide impartial and realistic advice and guidance;
- provide full and up to date information about education, training and work;
- be responsive to individual needs. (Employment Department 1991)

The number and range of learning opportunities available through the EDP has grown rapidly; in 1996 there were 150 tutor-led and open learning courses provided on site. Participation is measured in hours of learning per month. In 1993 this figure was 200, at October 1995 it stood at 2000, with approximately half spent on open learning and half on tutor led courses.

The range of courses available on-site shows a bias towards work-related training, though some courses such as languages, literacy or computer skills could also be related to personal development objectives. Employees gain access to courses through an interview at the Centre, during which they will review their own work histories, interests, prior experience of education and training, strengths and weaknesses and aspirations for future development. At the end of the interview they will complete a personal Action Plan. The aim of the interview is to achieve a match between an employee and one of the existing courses provided on site. If this is not possible individuals can be referred to an outside guidance service, or a college, or they can consult the Training Access Point housed within the Centre.

Tuition fees are paid by the Company, but participants must bear the initial cost, only gaining a refund on successful completion of the course. In order to qualify for a refund the course must be approved by the Centre, and employees must gain approval from their departmental manager. Participation, both in the initial guidance interview and the learning opportunities, is entirely voluntary.

The Centre reports to a Steering Group chaired by the Director of Personnel, with membership including representatives from a Trade Union, from the local TEC, and from local Guidance Services.

Discussion

Since guidance became more widely recognised as central to the conceptualisation of learning opportunities during the 1980s a great deal of progress has been made in defining the activity itself, and in formulating principles which should inform the practice of guidance. The Unit for the Development of Adult Continuing Education produced a description of guidance (UDACE 1986) which became the benchmark standard for a decade. They described a process involving seven activities: informing, advising, counselling, assessing, enabling, advocating and feeding back; this was underpinned by seven general principles, that guidance should be: client centred, confidential, open to all, accessible, independent, widely publicised and capable of contributing to the development of learning opportunities. This discussion will focus on two of these principles — client-centredness and independence, which are central to our understanding of what guidance practice consists of, and examine them in relation to the findings of the research. In doing this it will aim to illustrate some of the tensions between the normative values and principles of guidance work and the realities of practice within an EDP.

Client centredness and independence both emphasise the importance of prioritising the learning needs of the user over the interests of the provider. The guidance worker's role is to assist clients in understanding and articulating their needs as a prerequisite to identifying relevant learning opportunities. Independence refers to the requirement that agencies should '... seek to ensure that all guidance given is based on the needs of the client, and not distorted by the needs of the education or training providers ...' (UDACE 1986, 45).

The Centre acknowledges the ideal of client centredness in its publicity, and the interview follows a process of self assessment and action planning which appears to put the client in the driving seat. However, the aims and structure of the programme set up tensions between the interests of the individual and the interests of the Company.

The Company's own rationale for the programme is clearly stated in its submission for Gateways funding:

> Achievement of world class manufacturing performance will require employees to reach their full potential...The starting point for this process is effective developmental guidance for employees which accurately identifies developmental needs and opportunities and empowers the employee to maximise their performance. (Extract from the Company's bid for Gateways funding)

The programme co-ordinator was clear about the main criteria for including courses in the programme:

> It has to reach the requirements of (the Company), it can't be basketweaving or anything like that, it has to be work-specific.

The interests of the Company appear to dominate and displace the normative values and principles of guidance, as expressed by the Gateways criteria, and the UDACE definition. However much Centre staff might be committed to the principles of client-centredness and independence they were acutely aware that the dominant criterion for success was the programme's ability to enhance productivity and profitability. This kind of tension is by no means unique to this context. For instance, the conflict of interest inherent in working within a Further Education institution which is competing for students, and providing impartial advice on the basis of client need, has been indicated by a number of studies (Chapman 1990, Connelly *et al.* 1996, Lowden and Powney 1993, Payne and Edwards 1996). Similarly, research on the use of guidance in the Training For Work programme for unemployed adults has noted the strength of the link between independence of funding, and impartiality of advice (Taylor and Killeen 1995, 18).

Employees themselves were well aware of the organisational culture they were operating in, and their understandings had a significant effect on how they approached the guidance interview. The programme co-ordinator noted that general diagnostic questions about strengths and weaknesses, skills and abilities, tended to be interpreted as pertaining to work.

> I think because we're work oriented people tend to go straight into that. For example, I had a Team Leader this afternoon who said 'I'm a good communicator, I've got good organisational skills', obviously building on the fact that he was a Team Leader (*Centre Co-ordinator*)

Centre staff actively encouraged employees to draw on a wider range of experience, but given the shared understanding of available outcomes it is perhaps not surprising that this was not always taken up. This aligns with the observation made by Kidd (1996, 147) that clients seeking guidance within work organisations are sometimes required 'to engage simultaneously in impression management and self disclosure' when discussing personal development goals.

The tensions and ambiguities surrounding the aims of the scheme are indicated by the attention given to containing expectations at the initial interview. As one member of Centre staff saw it, the function of the interview was to introduce a note of 'realism' into employee expectations.

> ...what we provide is not specific to their job and it will not necessarily gain them a promotion or help them in that way. We need to get away from that at the start so that they don't get any false hopes.

However, this message is tempered by the admission that participation in the programme:

> ... is a sign of commitment, and if they (participants) were to go for an internal vacancy, it's something that is worth mentioning in their application.

Several employees had indeed gained promotions, and linked them specifically to the learning they had done through the Centre. A production line worker of 16 years, who had been promoted to Supervisor the same week as the interview, commented:

> With the NEBS course there was no sense that if I do this course I've got a chance of becoming a Supervisor, although that did turn out to be the case. I suppose that was in the back of my mind that it might help at some time to give me a step up the ladder.

Dealing with ambiguities surrounding the aims of the programme and establishing 'realistic' expectations, rather than exploring individual potential and learning opportunities, had become the most important function of the guidance interview.

Employees had their own adaptive strategies, using the programme for their own individual purposes. Most described a mixture of personal and career related motives for studying. Courses in computer skills and languages lent themselves particularly well to this dual purpose. When asked whether she was studying for work related or personal reasons a participant on a computer course stated:

> The two sort of linked together, because I do a lot of computer work so I was interested in something which would help me at work, but would also be good for me if I ever leave and go elsewhere.

Some were more interested in greater job flexibility which would allow them to continue working, either for the Company or outside it. A forklift truck driver had this sort of progression in mind:

> They use computers in the office now, so if ever I was to get pregnant they could move me into there. My brother's got a business as well so I could help him out doing that.

Others were able to turn what were essentially work related courses to their own purposes. A shop floor worker who doesn't currently use a computer as part of his work defined his interest in the course in purely personal terms:

> It's for myself, it's not for the Certificate. I've got young children and it's not long before they'll want their own computers, so it may help me not to look so stupid.

In most cases they accepted the scheme for what it was: the provider of a limited menu of learning opportunities which were designed to contribute towards the commercial interests of the company, but may also benefit individuals. This in turn influenced the expectations and attitudes with which they approached the programme. Most participants valued the interview, not for the guidance it might provide, but as a necessary step in gaining access to a desired course. The understanding which had developed was of a scheme which provided courses, not one which provided guidance.

Conclusion

The research indicates the distance between the rhetoric of lifelong learning and the learning organisation (DfEE 1995, RSA 1995, CBI 1994), which has been incorporated into the rationale for

EDPs, and the experience of participants on this programme. It also indicates the tensions which exist between the values and principles of guidance and the commercial interests of the employer. Participants in the programme were by no means the autonomous individuals making free choices across the whole range of education and training opportunities envisaged by either UDACE or the CBI. But neither were they entirely victims of the opportunity structure they found themselves in. They were operating pragmatically and opportunistically within a complex web of constraints and aspirations. They had a clear understanding of the possibilities and the limitations of the programme, not just in terms of current learning opportunities available, but also the more subtle rules affecting the purposes and outcomes of learning which would be viewed with approval by the Company. They had chosen to participate in the programme because it offered them an opportunity to learn, where previously there had been none. In other words, they were not presenting themselves as subjects for the idealised practice of guidance. The constraints on the client-centredness, independence and even confidentiality of the guidance offered, or on the extent of the learning opportunities available, were less important than the fact that these things existed at all.

Perhaps the most important question to ask in assessing the role of guidance in this context is 'whose interests does it serve?' Those of the provider or those of the participant? In this programme, outcomes for participating employees were impressive, with evidence of entry and progression by individuals who had little or no experience of education and training since leaving school. For these people, often constrained by work and family commitments, the programme represented their only opportunity to engage in learning. Outcomes for the Company included a training programme benefiting from substantial public funding, which directly contributed towards a more highly skilled and motivated workforce, taking place in employees' own time. As a member of the Centre staff commented, this constitutes extremely cheap training. The Company had been able to blur the boundary between technical, work-related training, and learning for personal development. In so doing it was able to achieve the benefits of the former, in terms of a more highly skilled and motivated workforce, and the benefits of the latter, in terms of public funding and public image as a 'learning organisation'. The Company was able to devolve some of the responsibility for work-related training and development to employees, encouraging them to make their own learning choices and set aside their own time to pursue them. Viewed as a management strategy the scheme could be represented as a means of control, a non-repressive form of power, a 'normalising' device designed to manufacture consent by gaining the commitment and loyalty of workers to the labour process (Sakolosky 1992). Benefits to the Company then amount to far more than the accumulation of relevant skills in the workforce, as the processes of guidance and learning become intertwined with the processes of management, and employees learn self-management and self-regulation. The balance or equity of the deal being struck here is not easy to assess; are we witnessing the operation of guidance as a liberatory force extending its influence into new contexts of adult learning, or guidance as a regulatory process working within a new framework of employer/employee relations? Neither of these polarities adequately represents the programme which is the subject of this study, but they do illustrate some of the ambiguities in the position and meaning of guidance work as its practices are transferred to, and adapted within, novel contexts.

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Demand and supply of adult education and training

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In this paper, we map the patterns of demand and supply of adult education and training in six countries: Canada, the Netherlands, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States.

The data of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) are used to describe national participation patterns, demand characteristics and supply characteristics. Distinctions are made between work related and leisure related education. Special attention is paid to unfulfilled demands: people who wanted to participate in adult education but did not.

In a multivariate model, the determinants of participation in either work related or leisure related adult education and training are explored.

Data

The data used in this paper were gathered in the context of the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). IALS is an international comparative project aimed at measuring the literacy and numeracy skills of the adult population (16-65) in a number of industrialised countries. The data were gathered by means of a household survey. The measurement of the skills was done by means of a test instrument. Information about the respondents was gathered by means of an extensive background questionnaire. Because adult education and training are major instruments for intervention in the case of insufficient or lacking skills, some of the countries gathered detailed information about participation in adult education and training.

The dataset that was used included data from the United States, Canada, Poland, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands. Unfortunately the leading question about participation was phrased differently in Germany, which meant that the German data could not be used. In Sweden a lot of the more detailed questions about participation were not asked. This results in a dataset with full information about participation in the United States, Canada, Switzerland, Poland and the Netherlands and partial information about Sweden. All the analyses are based on weighed data.

One more restriction was made. To exclude young students, respondents who were younger than 25 and were studying at the time of the interview were excluded.

Results

Participation patterns

The major distinction is between participants and non-participants. The question put to the respondents was, whether they had participated in any form of organised adult education or training in the 12 months preceding the interview. Although there are national differences, there is a sizeable portion of the adult population of about 40% who can be counted as participants (see Table 1).

Table 1 Percentage of the population participating in adult education and in job/career related or personal interest related adult education

Country	% participating	% participation in job related	% participation in personal	100%
Sweden	52.9	-	-	N=2147
USA	42.4	37.9	5.0	N=2764
Switzerland	39.6	25.8	17.0	N=2559
Canada	38.9	31.7	9.5	N=4534
Netherlands	37.8	25.3	13.1	N=2611
Poland	14.3	10.5	3.6	N=2676

Sweden has an exceptionally high participation rate of more than 50%. On the other end, the participation rate is relatively low in Poland, the other countries occupy the middle ground with participation rates that centre around the 40%.

An important distinction within adult education participation is whether people take courses for career or job-related purposes or out of personal interest. In this project respondents were asked to make that distinction themselves.

People can take more than one course and as we will see later on, they often did. In Table 1 however we only mention what percentage of the population took a course (one or more) for job related or personal purposes. The small number of people who mentioned other reasons (for example legal obligations) are not taken into account. For these reasons the percentages for participation in job related and personal interest adult education do not add up to the percentage for total participation (see endnote 1).

It is clear that participation in adult education in the United States and Canada is to a much larger extent dominated by job- or career related purposes than in Switzerland or the Netherlands. Switzerland stands out as a country where a relatively large proportion of the population participates in adult education for reasons of personal interest, a reason that plays a very modest role in the United States.

Participation in itself is a rather crude measure, because it can range from a one day seminar to a part-time university course and because people can take only one course or several. The impact of adult education is probably more determined by the intensity of participation than by the occurrence of participation as such. Table 2 gives the average number of courses taken per country and the total amount of time spent on participation. These averages are calculated for those who participated only. Separate figures are given for career related and personal interest related courses.

There are significant differences in the average number of courses taken in the different countries, as well as in the average total amount of time spent on adult education and training. An important point to make is that the range of total time spent is large; while the average total time for the countries in Table 2 is 217 hours, the standard deviation is 419 hours.

Bearing in mind the remark about the large standard deviations, people in the United States and Canada take more courses than people in Switzerland and the Netherlands, but Canada and the Netherlands lead the ranks as far as total time spent on adult education and training is concerned. In general, courses in the Netherlands and Canada seem to be twice as long as those in the United States.

Table 2 Average number of courses taken and average amount of time spent on adult education in the preceding 12 months

Country	average number. of courses	average time on AE hours	average time work hours	average time personal hours
Canada	2.4	300	301	207
Switzerland	1.9	137	153	129
USA	2.7	161	151	123
Netherlands	1.6	239	283	163
Poland	1.4	149	128	200

In general people take more job related than personal interest related courses, and on average they also spend more time on job related courses, with only Poland as an exception.

Demand characteristics

What are the characteristics of the people whose demand has translated itself into actual participation? The overall pattern is that in the countries under investigation, men and women participate in AE almost equally; countries with a slight over-representation of women amongst the participants are Sweden and the USA. The pattern changes considerably, when we differentiate between job related and personal interest courses. On average, job related courses are taken by 30% of the men and 24% of the women, personal interest courses by 6% of the men and 13% of the women (Swedish data not included). This phenomenon is particularly marked in the Netherlands and (to a lesser extent) in Canada and Switzerland. The pattern in the United States and Poland is much more 'equal' as far as gender is concerned.

A general and well known pattern is that adult education participation is lower in the older age-groups and the results in Table 3 partly confirm this. Leaving Poland aside for the moment, most countries have the highest participation rates in the youngest age-group (16-25) with the exception of Sweden. Canada is particularly successful in attracting this age-group. As the transition from school to work takes place within this age-group, it would be interesting to know to what extent the characteristics of this transition take on a specific form in Canada.

In line with the high 'over all' participation rate in Sweden, the participation rate in Sweden is higher in all the age groups above 25 years. Striking is the Swedish success in attracting relative large numbers from the older age groups; about a third of the people in the age-group 56-65 still participate in some form of adult education. The Netherlands and Canada are far less successful in attracting these older groups. In general, the best predictor of participation in adult education is the level of (original) educational attainment, mostly operationalised as the highest level of completed education in initial education (Houtkoop and van der Kamp 1992). For this dataset, the results are given in Table 4.

The pattern that there is a strong relationship between educational level and participation in AE certainly holds true, with marked differences between education preceding and at the first level (ISCED level 1), second level first stage (ISCED level 2) and second level second stage (ISCED level 3). The differences are less marked between the levels 5 and 6/7, which are all on the third level (non-university and university.

Table 3 Percentage of participants in adult education in each age group

Age	Canada	Switzerland	USA	Netherlands	Poland	Sweden
16-25	57.7	49.5	46.9	49.1	17.4	47.0
26-35	41.9	46.6	46.5	45.9	17.4	57.2
36-45	41.7	42.2	44.9	40.4	18.4	61.0
46-55	33.4	35.8	43.8	30.6	11.4	57.3
56-65	14.7	20.6	26.8	17.0	2.8	34.8
average participation	38.9	39.6	42.4	37.8	14.3	52.9
100%=	N=4534	N=2557	N=2764	N=2610	N=2676	N=2146

Table 4 Percentage of participants in adult education on each ISCED level of educational attainment

ISCED level	Canada	Switzerland	USA	Netherlands	Poland	Sweden
0/1	15.5	9.7	12.3	17.8	2.7	27.0
2	27.0	19.1	23.1	29.5	10.3	47.2
3	35.5	42.9	33.5	44.5	20.8	53.4
5	53.6	56.0	57.8	-	33.2	67.0
6/7	59.7	55.2	67.1	52.7	36.0	70.2
average participation	38.7	39.9	42.5	37.9	14.4	52.9
100%=	N=4471	N=2420	N=2760	N=2594	N=2762	N=2064

In line with a high 'over all' participation rate, Sweden also attracts most adult education students at all educational levels. Besides that the Netherlands and Canada are relatively successful in attracting participants with a lower educational background, while the USA draws relatively many participants from the group with a university background.

The distribution over the labour market categories (table not available for reasons of space) shows a similar pattern for the different countries with an overrepresentation of participants amongst employed people and an under-representation amongst retired people, and homemakers. Striking is the large percentage of the employed in Sweden that participated in adult education (60%) is striking. Although the unemployed participate less than the employed, there is still a sizeable share of this group that participates, rising to around 40% in Sweden and the Netherlands.

Supply characteristics

Supply characteristics are operationalised as characteristics of the courses that people take (course content, institutions, locations, media used in the transfer of knowledge) and conditions that influence participation (financial support, social stimuli).

As we mentioned before, participants often took more than one course and in the questionnaire details about these different courses were asked, up to a maximum of three courses. In the following tables, the participants in adult education (or job related adult education) are the percentage base, which means that for certain categories the answers may add up to more than 100%.

The vast majority of the participants take a course that leads to professional or career upgrading, for most of the countries this applies to 90% of the participants, and when we only look at people who took job related courses, this rises to more than 100% (taking into account that people could have taken more than one course). University diplomas rank second in the United States and Canada (mentioned by 24% and 13% of the participants), while trade-vocational diplomas rank second in Switzerland (10%), the Netherlands (9%) and Poland (16%). It is striking to see the important role that institutions for higher education across the Atlantic play in adult education, as compared to some of the European countries. In Canada the number of people who take a course to get an elementary or secondary school diploma is relatively large (10%).

What institutions provide these courses? (see Table 5). Companies have first rank in all the countries, while commercial providers also hold a strong position, especially in the Netherlands and Poland. Institutions for higher education also play an important role, especially in the United States. Further education colleges are also major providers, but this is a difficult category, because of the differences in national educational systems. What is subsumed under this term merits further investigation. The category is lacking in Switzerland, while in the Netherlands different institutions are

Table 5 Suppliers of adult education (percentage base=participants in adult education)

Supplier	Canada	Switzerland	USA	Netherlands	Poland
university/higher ed.	21.6	20.4	44.1	17.8	11.2
further ed. college	25.7	-	9.5	22.6	22.0
commercial	24.9	31.1	30.1	32.4	26.0
producer/supplier equipment.	11.2	11.7	12.4	4.9	6.1
non profit org.	19.3	24.8	16.4	8,5	12.5
company	49.6	42.2	51.9	34.6	28.5
other	20.4	106.4	18.5	31.5	34.0
100%	N=1762	N=*701[2]	N=1170	N=987	N=*367

taken together that are in the process of merging into regional training centres (ROCs).

The pattern does not change fundamentally when we only look at the participation in job related courses, although the share of providers like companies and suppliers of equipment rises.

As far as the medium of instruction is concerned, there is an amazing similarity in the order of ranking in the different countries (no table available for reasons of space). 'Traditional' media like classroom instruction and reading materials are by far the most important. Cassettes and tapes take third position and on the job training fourth. A modern medium like educational software has a modest fifth position. Especially in the United States little use seems to be made of this medium. The picture doesn't change fundamentally when we only look at job related training. As could be expected, on the job training then becomes more important, and is more often in third position.

To what extent do people receive financial support for taking courses in adult education? Financial support for example from employers or governments can be a major stimulus for participation (table not available for reasons of space). Important sponsors for adult education participation are the participants themselves or their employers.

Moving from financial support for participation in adult education in general to participation in job related adult education, it is obvious that the support of employers increases and takes first rank in all the countries involved. The participants themselves appear to be willing to invest in job related adult education; in the United States and the Netherlands the employers have a more dominant position. The role of financial support from the government differs with a larger role in Canada and Switzerland and a smaller role in the United States and the Netherlands. Information about the size of the financial contributions is not available, so a final statement about the distribution of total costs of adult education amongst different sponsors cannot be made.

Unfulfilled demands

Although the number of participants in the different countries is impressive, there are still demands that are not fulfilled. Respondents were asked whether there were courses that they wanted to take but did not. In Table 6 we made a distinction between those who wanted to take a job related course and those who wanted to take a course for hobby/recreational /personal interest purposes. We calculated the percentage of different groups (all respondents, non-participants, participants in job related and personal interest courses) who expressed these wishes.

It is striking that in actual participation the career related purposes clearly dominate, but in courses one wanted to take but did not, the share of career one wanted to take but did not, the share of career related and hobby courses is almost equal. Another general conclusion is that those who already participate in courses, are also the ones who are most inclined to take more courses, an indication of the so-called 'matthaeus effect'. People with the highest levels of educational attainment participate most in adult education, but those who already participate in adult education, are also the ones who want to participate more (Houtkoop 1985). Finally it must be noted that in some countries there are sizeable minorities who wanted to participate in adult education but did not. Within that general pattern there are clear national differences.

Table 6 Percentage of different groups who wanted to take a work related or hobby/personal interest course, but did not

Multivariate analyses

In this section we estimate a model explaining participation in training. The descriptive analyses in the previous sections already revealed that the factors affecting participation in work-related training and those influencing leisure-related training are different. The analysis in this section will be limited to work related courses. The method used was a 'probit model'

Table 6 percentage of different groups who wanted to take a work-related or hobby/personal interest course, but did not

	wish job				wish hobby			
	non part	part personal	part job	all resp	non part	part personal	part job	all resp
Canada	23.4	32.4	40.9	29.5	26.8	40.0	37.4	30.7
Switzerland	25.4	30.9	28.1	26.6	27.6	37.0	37.0	30.9
USA	17.6	26.3	33.6	23.7	13.4	30.4	25.2	18.4
Netherlands	18.1	17.1	22.3	18.7	18.2	25.4	25.8	20.8
Poland	11.2	21.4	23.2	12.8	5.8	21.7	15.4	7.4

As explanatory variables we include the variables which were already introduced in the descriptive analyses. Because of limitations of space, the table is not shown.

In Canada, the Netherlands and Poland, the lack of participation in work-related training is lower for women than for men. In Switzerland there is no significant gender difference, while in the US women have higher work-related training probabilities. This latter result deviates from other findings for the US. This difference is caused by the fact that we include both working and non-working respondents in the analysis. Although significant, the gender differences in training probabilities are quite small. Evaluated at mean values of the other explanatory variables, the difference does not exceed three per cent.

The negative relation between the incidence of work-related training and a person's age also shows up in the multivariate context. Older individuals have less chance to participate in a work-related training course than young persons. The relation is strongest in Canada and the Netherlands. Again evaluated at mean values of the other regressors, people in the youngest age group (16-25 years) have about 25 per cent higher work-related training probabilities than people in the oldest age group (56-65 years). In Switzerland and the US the age differential is about 10 per cent and in Poland it is only 6 per cent. The biggest effects on the probability to participate in work-related training are associated with educational level. Having the highest level of education (ISCED 6 or 7) instead of the lowest level (ISCED 0 or 1) raises the training probability in the US by 44 per cent. In Canada the difference is 35 per cent, in Switzerland 28 per cent and in Poland and the Netherlands the education training gap is around 20 per cent. Again, these figures are obtained putting the other variables at their mean values. Strong effects are also found for the person's labour market status. In Canada, the Netherlands and the US working persons have about 30 per cent higher chances to engage in work-related training than retired persons. In Switzerland this difference is 24 per cent and in Poland it is 12 per cent.

When we look at the determinants of leisure related adult education, educational level and age also have the biggest impact and in the same direction as in work related adult education. However the relationship with gender and labour market status is different; women and non-working people have a higher probability to participate in leisure related adult education.

Summing up

Adult education and training are moving to the centre stage of the educational and even the societal system, as economies are to an increasing extent dependent upon the knowledge and skills of its adult population, and there is a growing need to update and restore levels of knowledge and skills during the lifetime. The outcome of supply and demand characteristics of adult education and training is a major force in shaping these skills levels.

It is clear from the results presented here that in the countries under consideration there is already a high level of adult education participation. Forty percent of the adult population of the Netherlands, the United States and Switzerland, participated in the preceding year, in Sweden the percentage is even higher and in Poland it is lower. The average yearly time investment is over 200 hours. Most adult education participants take courses for job related purposes, although in Switzerland and the Netherlands personal interest is also an important motivation.

The demand side shows a familiar pattern. Men and women participate almost equally, although men take more courses for job related purposes, a tendency that is particularly marked in the Netherlands. Participation is mostly concentrated in the youngest age groups, with the exception of Sweden and Poland. Canada is particularly successful in attracting participants from the younger age group, Sweden is one of the few countries that also attracts relatively many older participants. The relationship between participation and educational attainment is strong, the lowly educated participate far less. People who are employed participate more, but a sizeable minority of the unemployed take up courses as well, especially when they are job related.

On the supply side, the vast majority of courses that are taken lead to professional or career upgrading qualifications. University diploma are mentioned relatively often in the United States and Canada. Companies are the major providers of adult education, but commercial institutions have a strong position on the training market as well, especially in Poland and the Netherlands. It is striking that as far as the media of instruction are concerned, 'traditional' media like classroom instruction and reading materials have the upper hand. For the job related courses on the job training is (modestly) important. Companies are major financial sponsors for adult education participation, and this is particularly marked for job related courses. But participants themselves are also major financial contributors. The financial role of government in job related adult education is of some importance in Canada and Switzerland, less so in the United States and the Netherlands and almost absent in Poland.

Although participation figures are impressive, there are still large groups (ranging between 20% and 30% with the exception of Poland) who wanted to take a course in the preceding year, but did not. People who already participated in adult education are also the ones who most often expressed the (unfulfilled) wish to participate more. Lack of time and financial constraints are mentioned most as reasons why people eventually did not participate.

On the basis of the multivariate analyses it can be concluded that women, older and lower educated people have lower probabilities to participate in job related adult education than men, younger and higher educated people. The educational level is the strongest predictor. The pattern is somewhat different in courses taken for personal interest or leisure; there women and non employed people have a higher probability to participate. However the effect of educational level and age is the same as in work related adult education.

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Endnotes.

1. Because people often took more than one course, there are also people who took job related as well as personal interest courses. In the construction of the variable whether people took a job related course, we also included the group of people who took job related as well as personal interest courses. The following table depicts the participation pattern of people who took a job related course. It is clear that they often took more than one job related course, but in many instances took a personal interest course as well.

	Canada	Switzerland	USA	Netherlands	Poland
% people job-related courses	159.7	146.7	167.3	143.3	135.9
% people personal interest course	13.4	20.0	5.2	13.9	4.3
100% =	N=1438	N=658	N=1047	N=659	N=282

2. In some cases the respondents did not answer all the categories in a question. Those cases marked with an asterisk (*) and the number given is the average number of respondents who answered the different number of categories.

Shadows in the swamp: dialogues in reflective practice

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The title of this paper derives from Schön's (1983) evocative image of 'the swampy lowlands' of professional practice where theories-in-use are not always clearly articulated. Drawing on personal experience of reflection, a continuing dialogue with colleagues and students engaged in reflective practice (RP), and the use of imagery, the paper represents an attempt to articulate not so much the theory as the felt reality of 'doing RP' and of facilitating it. Like much personal reflection, it begins with a story. This one comes from the ancient Sufi tradition and is about one of the many ordinary events in the life of Nasrudin, a so-called wise fool.

> One night a stranger comes across Nasrudin on his hands and knees in the road outside his house and asks what he is doing. Nasrudin replies that he is searching for a dropped key. Offering to help, the stranger asks where Nasrudin thinks he may have last had the key. Nasrudin points towards his house and says, 'Over there'.
>
> 'But why, then', asks the puzzled stranger, 'are you searching for it out here?'
>
> 'Obviously', replies Nasrudin, exasperated by the naivety of the question, 'because this is where the light is!'

Nasrudin's wisdom shows in his recognition of how much easier it is to find things where the light is. Yet he is foolish in failing to acknowledge that the light does not always shine where the thing one is searching for may actually lie.

In attempting not only to define but to facilitate RP for experienced professionals who are undertaking Masters degrees as part-time students, I often feel sympathetic to Nasrudin's plight. I have frequently turned to the light of existing academic literature to reveal *The* key that will allow me to understand for myself and explain to my students *exactly* what RP is.

Sometimes I find *a* key: something someone has written gives me a name for a process I have lived through and hence brings a sort of order to what was experienced as chaotic (Hunt, Edwards, McKay and Taylor 1994); or it confirms that a struggle I have undertaken has validity and meaning because the writer has endured a similar struggle and drawn conclusions which resonate with my own (Hunt 1996a); or it simply provides me with a new perspective from which to review, extend my understanding of, and perhaps re-interpret the processes of RP (Hunt 1997).

Often, though, I realise I am the only person who already owns the key to understanding why I have initially interpreted and reacted to a situation in my professional practice in a particular way - but in order to find it I will have to look in the shadows in my own mind.

From my attempts to understand and 'do' RP, therefore, I recognise that I have a value position; I also find the use of metaphors helpful in conceptualising mental processes. Using the latter to state the former, my belief is that RP requires a willingness to cross and re-cross consciously the borders in one's mind between the light of what is already known and the shadows where ideas, thoughts and connections lie hidden or, at best, only dimly perceived.

Like Atkins and Murphy (1993, 1191), I acknowledge a difference between analysis and reflection whereby analysis may be more objective but 'Reflection ... must involve the self and must lead to a changed perspective'. However, I also acknowledge that the extent to which each individual wishes, or even feels it appropriate, either to involve the self or to enter and explore the shadowed territory of the mind probably depends upon her/his particular orientation to RP (Wellington and Austin 1996).

The next section draws heavily on my own perceptions of the nature of the shadowed territory of the mind — not because I want to persuade you that this territory as a whole conforms to my personal map of what seems to lie there, but because I believe that the processes of mapping and orienteering are fundamental to RP itself.

Mind-maps

For me, to do RP is to be willing to state, 'This is how and where I am now and this is the particular map I'm using on which to identify my position'; to site oneself in a place where, implicitly or explicitly, others (including those who are met only through the medium of their writing) may be able to point to hitherto unexplored pathways that will lead to a different position — or even to recommend the use of a different kind of map.

How societies and organisations, as well as individuals, acquire their particular mind-maps of the way the world is and of their place and function within it has fascinated me for some time, not least because of the apparent effect of such maps on attitudes and behaviour patterns (Hunt 1993).

To take a simple example of the latter, if a map indicates that one is in a particular kind of environment (hostile, mechanical, caring, non-confrontational, or whatever) and one's daily experiences repeatedly confirm this, the stronger one's belief is likely to become that the map provides accurate representation of the world in which one lives — and, in turn, the more one's attitudes/ behaviours will themselves help to consolidate this picture (Wilson 1990).

Many therapeutic processes are designed to challenge and change acquired mind-maps that help to reinforce responses which, while seeming appropriate to the individual, appear dysfunctional to others who map and live in the world differently. RP can sometimes lead the practitioner down a similar route, signposted by the question, '*Why* is this how and where I am now?'

There are two issues here: first, challenge and change can have a profoundly disorientating effect on the individual; second, there seems to be an assumption that the collective rather than the individual map is somehow better or more real. An anecdote may be helpful in adding a little substance to the first of these statements before I comment on the more general implications of both in the context of RP.

Several years ago, having been Christmas shopping in London's Oxford Street, I came out of Selfridges department store and headed towards Marble Arch, a couple of minutes walk away, where I had arranged to meet a friend. After five minutes of pushing through the crowds, not only had the station not come into view but I saw a bus for Marble Arch coming towards me! My mounting anxiety about being late was suddenly compounded by the realisation that I had been walking in completely the opposite direction to what I had supposed. It was a trivial enough event but its immediate consequence was dramatic: Mentally, my internal map of where I was flipped through a 180 degree turn and, in that moment, I felt physically nauseous and dizzy.

More recently, I experienced exactly the same reaction during a fairly acrimonious discussion with a colleague over a professional matter. Just as I had earlier been sure of my position in relation to Selfridges and Marble Arch, I had been convinced from the outset that a course of action I had previously taken, but which was now in dispute, had been ethically correct. Suddenly, my colleague said something that had the same effect as sighting the bus in confirming a vaguely-felt but growing sense of unease.

This time it was not a bus which came into view but the mental image of a headteacher with whom, as a school governor many years before, I had had a similar clash over her 'misinterpretation' of what I had always felt to be an entirely appropriate course of action which I had encouraged other governors to take. Realising that two people in two different settings had now given me feedback which brought my own perspective seriously into question had the same disorientating effect on my mental map of the 'rightness' of our various positions as my 'Selfridges experience' had had on my mental map of where I was in London.

In the jargon of RP, the abrupt linking of all three events through the medium of the physical nausea is probably an uncomfortable example of what Schön (1983) would call 'reflection-in-action'. It may have occurred spontaneously but I suspect it was precipitated by considerable 'reflection-on-action' which I had been undertaking individually and with colleagues as part of our continuing struggle to practise what we preach in facilitating RP for our students.

In any case, the experience of deliberately and systematically crossing the border into the shadowed territory of my mind in earlier reflection-on-action had at least partially prepared me for the fact that, though visiting the terrain might not always be comfortable, the very existence of this largely uncharted land of past experience and thought has a profound effect on what I feel and do and how I locate my professional practice in the present.

Indeed, I have often found the key to the 'Why?' of a present re/action in these shadowlands of the past. It can, literally, be dizzying when this opens up an entirely new and unexpected perspective on something I have done or thought — but continuing explorations have assured me that, once the dizziness has passed, my internal map of how and where I now am will have been usefully enlarged. What seems to be vitally important is to be able to create a still point during the undoubtedly disorientating re-mapping period which can follow journeys into the mind's shadows.

Re-crossing the border

In the context and aftermath of the discussion with my colleague, it was necessary to acknowledge to myself, though I did not do so more openly in the discussion itself, the validity of a completely different interpretation of my role in certain events. It was also essential to hold on to the fact that this did not necessarily threaten the integrity either of my original position, taken when the new insights were obviously not available, or of the core 'me' which remains constant through time and changing circumstances.

To some extent, my earlier practice of RP helped me to retain this sense of self whilst the basis of a behaviour pattern — which I had not even recognised as a pattern before and which I now know to be deeply-rooted in a partially-genderised view of the world where confrontation and challenge is unacceptable — was confronted and challenged. That pattern is now 'in the light' for me, a named feature on the internal map which informs my professional practice.

In such brief description the process sounds simple. The reality was painful and messy. Re-mapping of this nature is rarely an isolated academic exercise: it happens deep in the swampy lowlands of professional practice where yesterday's sense of direction can often be lost in the struggle to survive in the quicksand of today's imperatives.

The unconditional support of a close colleague undoubtedly helped me to remain centred while I adjusted to the new light and shadow patterns in my bit of the swamp. As a tutor on a course where students are required to engage in RP in order to produce an assessed piece of work, it concerns me that we may cause them to enter their own shadowlands without proper preparation — and that I and my fellow tutors are neither equipped nor in a position to offer the kind of unconditional support they may then need.

Most of our students are 'distance learners'. Contact is largely through written correspondence and occasional telephone conversations and, at most, three one-day group meetings each year; few students have access to email. Thus, we do not always have the kind of intimate knowledge of students' immediate professional and personal concerns that is more readily available when students attend regular seminars. Our reading of their descriptions of events may not, therefore, be so complete as on a conventional taught course and, in our written 'dialogue at a distance', there is an inevitable delay between presentation of an issue and response to it.

Before commenting further on other related concerns about facilitating RP at a distance, I want to return to something I noted earlier: that RP has some affinity with therapeutic practices which encourage the individual to explore and make connections between past and present experiences, and perhaps redefine them. Drawing on a personal anecdote, I have described something of this process. However, I do not wish to imply that the intentions of RP and therapy are the same.

While engagement in RP can require the practitioner to re-examine and consolidate personal experiences which may well have taken place outside the professional arena, the distinctiveness of RP seems to be that its focus and finishing point remain firmly within that arena. Individual reflection cannot, therefore, be divorced from the constraints of institutional thinking. The concept of RP merges with that of organisational learning (OL) along this rather fuzzy border.

Holding the boundaries

Douglas (1987) once argued that 'How institutions think' not only affects our individual thinking but must lie beyond question because:

> all the classifications that we have for thinking with are provided ready-made, along with our social life. ... How can we possibly think of ourselves in society except by using the classifications established in our institutions?

However, her own anthropological studies of the apparently natural analogies with which the classifications of social relations and political hierarchies are often justified pointed the way to much subsequent practical work in which self-designated 'learning organisations' have sought to understand and transform themselves.

Generally prompted by the need to function more effectively in the market place, such work seems itself to be directly analogous with the voyages of medieval seafarers who sailed beyond the boundaries of existing maps which warned 'Here Be Dragons'. They, too, went in search of profit but, in the process, helped to change an entire world-view.

In the manner I have described in relation to individual RP, a planned collective voyage past the dragons of long-standing custom and practice into the shadowlands of an organisation has the potential to change how an organisation thinks of and presents itself, as well as the way in which it encourages and supports its members (Morgan 1993, 1997, and Senge 1990 give examples of this process; Hawkins 1994 summarises key features of OL).

For a lone reflective practitioner in an organisation/institution which does not favour such exploration, having knowledge of 'lands beyond' which no-one wishes even to think about can be a frustrating and alienating experience. As tutors facilitating RP and required to assess a final piece of accredited work in the fairly rigid manner prescribed by our own largely non-reflective institution, we can never become complacent about the effects of encouraging students to 'look over there' into the shadowlands of their own experience where personal or institutional demons may lurk. In the written course materials we have tried to make such issues explicit (Hunt 1996b).

We remain aware, though, that other travellers' tales and warnings rarely mean much until they are matched against personal experience. Issuing a warning may technically absolve us of some responsibility if students do subsequently meet their own demons in the form of significant life/career questions. But, when the resolution of these is likely to go way beyond the confines of the academic programme where, for a limited period, we and our students share a common space out of which the questions have actually been formulated, how should we respond?

We cannot give unconditional support. For example, it is not within our brief nor, for most of us, within our skills repertoire, to provide in-depth counselling. Neither are we contracted, nor all equipped, to operate as organisational consultants. Thus, though we sometimes find ourselves beginning to be carried by a student's anxiety or enthusiasm towards one of these positions, for the most part we feel it important to delineate clearly the boundary of our roles *as tutors on an academic programme.*

Sometimes it may be appropriate for us to encourage students to seek support from other professionals. However, if their RP takes students off at wide tangents of exploration, we have come to the conclusion that our task is not to follow and protect them but to 'hold the space' from which they started so that they can return to it and effect its eventual closure by completing the written work required for formal course assessment purposes.

Our focus has ultimately to be on the quality of what students produce on their return. We have to ensure that their final submission is well-structured; clearly describes their engagement with RP and identifies key learning/action points; draws on relevant literature and uses it effectively; and provides insight into the development of thinking, feeling and understanding which has emerged from undertaking this work.

Such criteria may seem little different from those used to assess other academic assignments. However, our feedback/assessment has always to be sensitive to the intensely personal and developmental nature of RP and its association with students' professional lives. In registering on a Masters programme and, particularly, in engaging with a module on RP, students often signal their need for a breathing space outside the swamp of their on-going professional practice; for a still point where, if only for a few hours each week, they can pause, adjust their vision to the lights and shadows of continuing experience, and consider alternative directions. In helping to create and then hold that space for them against the ever-insistent pull of the swamp, we have to be very clear about its boundaries.

One, as I have already indicated, is around our role as tutors to ensure that we are not pulled too far away from the anchor point of the programme. In order to keep the programme's space safe for students we also have to work explicitly within boundaries of confidentiality.

Many students have high-status jobs in their own institutions and organisations. In consequence, the extent to which they wish, or feel able, to share their reflections on pressing and frequently volatile professional issues or personal concerns can sometimes be limited by a sense of status incongruence or a formal professional code of ethics. Conversely, for some, the requirement to engage in RP provides the first opportunity in their working life to explore the personal implications of a professional constraint or difficulty and they may commit to paper some intensely personal insights which they later regret having shared.

By using extremes for illustration, I hope I have not implied that RP is always fraught with danger, or requires some dramatic demon-slaying conclusion. In general, like the seafarers' voyages beyond the edge of the map, 'doing RP' is largely about being on a learning journey — and employing a variety of techniques to enhance awareness of the journey itself, its documentation, and any new opportunities it presents. Thus, while part of our role as tutors may be to alert students to potential danger zones (and exit routes), perhaps the greater part of it is simply about keeping them awake and open to new ways of learning, teaching and understanding themselves!

Whatever their circumstances, and how and wherever students are enabled to identify the keys to their own learning, understanding and improved professional practice, I believe it is essential to 'do RP' in order to facilitate it. Perhaps, on reflection, I will abandon my attempt to find *the* key to RP and continue to search instead for the still points among the shifting shadows of experience in my own professional swamp.

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Beyond facilitation in adult education: power dynamics in teaching and learning practices

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The idea of the teacher as a facilitator is a hallmark of adult education (Apps 1991; Brookfield 1995; Knowles 1992). This central principle charges adult educators to go beyond the role that the teacher takes in traditional classroom settings and stipulates the need to treat adults as equals in the classroom. Yet, it is clear that facilitation does not occur on a neutral stage, but in the real world of hierarchical power relations among all of the adults, including teachers and learners. When learners and teachers enter classrooms they bring their positions in the hierarchies that order the world, including those based on race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and disability. Because the social context is duplicated in the microcosm of the classroom (Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 1996; Tisdell 1993), enacting the facilitation role will reproduce the power structures that privilege some, silence some, and deny the existence of other learners (hooks 1994; Maher and Tetreault 1994). If all learners are to thrive, adult educators must go beyond the facilitator's role to directly negotiate the power dynamics in the classroom. Some theorists have recognised these issues (Brookfield 1995; Tisdell 1995), and others have begun to call for reconstructing the image of the adult educator as facilitator (Boud and Miller 1996; Shor 1996).

Theoretical perspective: are adult education classes the real world?

Nearly all discussions of teaching in adult education simply avoid this question (Knowles 1980). In this script for teaching adults, we are presented with the unspoken assumption that the activity must happen in a parallel universe to the real world because the power relationships that are omnipresent in the social and organisational settings of everyday life have been obliterated. By stripping learners and teachers of their place in the hierarchies of social life, this view assumes we stage adult education where the politics of everyday life do not operate or matter. This view asks us to see teachers and learners as generic entities, unencumbered by the hierarchies that structure our social relationships.

Another answer to the question is that adult education is not exactly the real world, and this is precisely what contributes to its effectiveness. Sork (1984, 7) argues that the:

> participant is both an emigrant and an immigrant. He or she temporarily leaves one environment or social system and temporarily enters another. Although a certain amount of environmental baggage always accompanies learners, removing them from their natural setting for the time of the program isolates them from distractions and day-to-day concerns and enables then to concentrate on the problem at hand.

In contrast to Knowles, this view recognises that people cannot shed their 'environmental baggage' when they are in an educational setting. Nevertheless, this baggage is not seen as a source of insights for teaching. The emphasis is on creating a new environment where these factors will not get in the way of effective learning. This view asks us to see that teachers and learners are not generic individuals (we all have environmental baggage).

Our view is that adult education must be the real world because the power relationships that structure our social lives cannot possibly be checked at the classroom door. There is no magical transformation that occurs as teachers and learners step across the threshold of the classroom. McIntosh (1995) also uses the baggage metaphor by discussing White privilege and male privilege as important socially-structured power relationships that affect our lives in and out of educational settings; these privileges are an '*invisible weightless knapsack* (italics added) of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes compass, emergency gear, and blank checks' that can be used in any situation in people's everyday lives. Some of McIntosh's (a White woman) examples that are relevant to educational settings include: 1) I can be fairly sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race, 2) I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group, and 3) If I have low credibility as a leader, I can be sure that my race is not the problem. McIntosh's analysis can be extended to include other ways that power structures our social relations, such as class, age, ability/disability, sexual orientation, and organisational position. This view asks us to see teachers and learners not as generic individuals but rather as people who have differential capacities to act (our definition of power) based on their place in the hierarchies of our social world.

A number of writers have begun to explore power dynamics in adult education classrooms, primarily focusing on issues of race, class, and gender (Colin and Preciphs 1991; Collard and Stalker 1991; Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 1996; Luttrell 1993; Sheared 1994; Tisdell 1993, 1995). These authors generally share the view captured by Collard and Stalker (1991, 72): 'Women's experiences in the learning environments of educational institutions cannot be separated from their experiences within the larger society'. Sheared (1994, 28) further explains that the: 'the womanist perspective seeks to expose the differences and similarities that human beings experience in the classroom as a result of skin colour, language, economic status, and personal experiences'. Although there is an increasing literature base on this topic, Tisdell (1995, 89) concludes that the research literature does not adequately address 'how systems of privilege and oppression are played out in the learning environment, or exactly what pedagogical strategies lead to individual and social transformation'. The purpose of this paper is to reconstruct the image of the adult educator as facilitator to one of a teacher who negotiates classroom power dynamics.

Research design and data collection

The design for this study was a qualitative comparative case study (Bogdan and Biklen 1992) of two graduate courses taught by the authors of this paper. Each class was taught in the same university, was of the same length (10 weeks), and met one night a week. One class in which 12 students were enrolled, 'Critical Perspectives on Adult Education', was taught by a White male professor. The other in which 19 students were enrolled, 'Qualitative Research in Education', was taught by a Black woman assistant professor. The three data sources included students' written (anonymous) evaluations at the end of the course, each teacher's observations of the course, and interviews of the teachers and students in the classes. Immediately following the courses' completion, each teacher interviewed the other about the power dynamics in their classes. During the final class session, each professor went to the other's class to solicit students to be interviewed. Seven students from each class were interviewed after the course's completion using a set of questions that indirectly addressed power issues. After each professor read the masked transcripts about their own classes, they interviewed each other again. Risk was inherent in this study not only for the students who volunteered but for the teachers who would hear what their students thought about their classes. Because risk was a dominant factor in this study, it was addressed at several points including at the solicitation for student interviews and in the human subjects form.

Results

The themes of mastery, voice, authority, and positionality found in previous research on classroom power dynamics (Maher and Tetreault 1994) were used to organise the results from this study of two adult education classrooms.

Mastery

Student and teacher interviews revealed that power dynamics were inherent in each class and, more importantly, revealed that these dynamics had a direct impact on students' learning. These dynamics negated the learning in some cases and in other cases 'empowered' students to learn on a deeper level. This was especially evident in the issue of mastery of the class material. A student in the adult education seminar class implied that his fellow students' lack of interest in certain areas kept him from acquiring the theoretical base he had hoped to obtain from this class: 'I just constantly said that this is the syndrome for the social sciences in the U.S. I think people are not forced to address the theories. (They seem to say) 'It's the dead White man's theories, forget it'.' So his analysis was that he did not learn what he could have because students in the class brought in their 'baggage' and entrenched themselves in single issue 'camps' along agenda lines of race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

Students in the qualitative research class also indicated that their mastery of the material was affected by the political needs of one student. They reported being negatively impacted in the learning environment when a student dominated the class discourse and the teacher did not interfere. One student said: 'There was one quantitative White woman in the class, young, beautiful 'White woman with a whiny voice. And she would take issue with everything. She was like a thorn'. This student went on to explain how she would shut down when this woman would attempt to take over from the teacher and that no matter what was said, 'I just wouldn't write it down'. Echoing her experiences another student said:

> I mean we had one person in particular...she was very heavily embedded in the quantitative paradigm. (She was) fairly vocal about her criticisms. She drove the rest of us crazy (in the beginning)...But the group process eventually shut her down a bit. She eventually calmed down and seemed to enjoy the class.

One Black male from the qualitative research class spoke directly of how his ability to grasp the course content was directly connected to his overall class experience: 'I felt empowered in this class...I am walking away from this class with renewed energy. Saying, 'You know what? I can do this. Once you apply yourself, it is not difficult for you to master it'.'

Voice

The ability to speak in class emerged as an important issue. Participants spoke about the positive and important feeling of being free to speak out in class and express their opinions. Additionally, students were attentive to who spoke the most in class, especially when they felt it interfered with their right to voice. In the seminar class students varied in their opinions of who talked the most and who might have been the class leaders. This indicated that the opportunity for expression varied enough so that students were unable to identify any one person as dominating the dialogue. However, the students in the research class identified one student who particularly took up more than her fair share of class time. One participant said:

> There was one woman who took up quite a bit of (the teacher's) time with private meetings because she was just so grateful to get some kind of feedback...(The teacher) was conscious of this and tried to balance it. (The student) had a lot to say in class but it was usually a beneficial contribution, so it wasn't disturbing.

Another participant described this same student as an 'accessory to (the teacher's) power' because she participated more in class discussions and was always eager to and encouraged to speak. He stated that she 'was used (by the teacher) to move issues along in class'. This participant said that the student had been seemingly designated by the teacher as a class leader and this encouraged other students to 'withdraw.'

Expressing similar sentiments, other students linked their ability to speak out to being sanctioned by the teacher. A Black male participant in the adult education seminar remarked that he felt so supported in the open environment that was nurtured by his professor that he was very revealing about his personal life:

> I think that he (the professor) believes he has a lot of privilege because he is a White man. And he seeks to understand that...and part of understanding that is learning why persons who are not White males feel the way that they do. I am gay...And I never verbalised that before in front of people who weren't my friends. So that was a scary but comfortable moment...it was a profound moment of class for me.

Authority

This theme addresses who had the power in the classroom. In traditional academic settings, it is assumed that the professor has the ability to control and to shape the environment more than any other single person. However, the adult education literature asserts that the art of facilitation which is the basis of andragogical practice mitigates such issues. The participants in both classes and the teachers felt that there were many definite instances where power was seized, negotiated, and forfeited in the classroom. In the adult education class several students felt that the White male professor possessed the power 'by default' even though it was a seminar where students were given the opportunity to design and govern the class. According to their interviews, the professor as agreed during the planning stages for the class was not to act in the traditional role of class leader. However, there was one instance where the professor assumed authority for a 'controversial situation' that was occurring in class. He intervened when a helper assigned by the Office of Disability Services for a student with visual impairment became involved in an unusually heated class discussion. The participants divided along racial lines over the appropriateness of his insistence that the disability worker not speak in class. Several of the White women in the class felt that he had 'hurt' the woman's feelings while others applauded his actions. One Black woman student offered the analysis that the White women in the class seemed to feel that it was culturally incorrect for the male professor to be firm with this young White woman student.

In the research class one common issue around authority was repeated by several students. It centred on a male student who openly challenged his Black female professor. Another male student related his discomfort in watching the exchange:

> He stood there for a long time and was challenging the professor...She talked to the person about why she (thought his answer on the exam was wrong). She allowed the person to talk for a long time. Then she said let's discuss this after class...I was taken aback by his confrontational manner and maybe other people felt the same way. We were listening and looking at the exchange.

Positionality

This theme addresses how the cultures, genders, races, ages, and sexual orientations of the teachers and students act and interact in the classroom environment. These positionalities more than any other factor dictate learning and patterns of classroom behaviour (Maher and Tetrault 1994). Two salient examples of student and teacher positionality are reported here. In the seminar class, the professor had the students perform an exercise where they created a class hierarchy ranking their classmates according to their perception of how they were classified in society. One Black woman student recounted this incident as a very painful one for a White woman student who dropped considerably in hierarchical status when she revealed that she was a lesbian:

> After she came out in class she was always ranked with me. She lost her privilege and it bothered her. She told me that she would never have come out if she had known that it was going to put her down there with me. I told her, 'It was okay to be down here'.

The incident involving the confrontation over the exam that occurred in the research class gives a clear example of how the position of the professor can impact the student/teacher interactions. One student analysed the situation succinctly:

> ...if I had a problem I would definitely talk to the professor but definitely not in a confrontational manner...There are groups of people who are marginalised in our society. And we know that

> females are marginalised and of course Black people are. I don't know if that was the person's reason for doing that but I wonder if this person would have challenged a White male the way he challenged her.

This student's analysis is probably correct because it was corroborated by the student who confronted the Black woman assistant professor. He explained that he felt 'kind of funny in class because he was surrounded by women that believe that feminism is something they have to go for'. He further explained that the female professor was 'dominant' in the classroom and that in his culture women are 'ornamental.' Another analysis of this situation was revealed by a third student who felt that it was wrong of the student to challenge the professor in an openly hostile manner but who also felt that the professor should not have been firm with him in front of the class. However, her sentiments reveal that she also felt uncomfortable with the woman professor's reactions which were assertive rather than nurturing. The student's questioning of the 'appropriateness' of the exchange placed the blame on the professor even though the male student was insistently confrontational and despite the fact that the teacher requested that they talk after class.

Discussion

This study showed the many complex ways in which the power relations in the larger society are played out in adult education classrooms and directly influence the teaching and learning process. Students in both classes were very conscious of how the classroom organised around power relationships. They monitored both teachers' behaviours and exchanges with other students. This was typified by a student in the seminar class who felt that one student in the class attempted to always 'sit next to him (the professor) as if that would give her a position of power'. All the students interviewed in the research class talked about one student who took up more than her fair share of class time. One participant stated: 'there was one girl who took up quite a bit of class time and (the teacher) was conscious of that...and tried to balance it'. A second student also took note of the teacher's attempt to balance the vocal student's class comments and observed that after a while the outspoken student understood what the teacher was attempting and would try to monitor herself and would make apologetic comments such as 'well this is my last question, but'.

The students' experiences evidence a tendency to want an interactive classroom where teachers attend to issues of who talks the most and who listens the most. The students interviewed were aware of how the classroom worked and where they stood in terms of power. In the seminar class the students expressed an interest in wanting more 'mediating' by the professor. Although the students in the research class described the overall atmosphere as positive and democratic where 'everyone was allowed to express their opinions', they still said that they experienced uncomfortable moments regarding how the power was negotiated by the teacher.

Both classes clearly wanted direction for the teachers and also wanted classroom power dynamics arbitrated, but varied along individual and cultural lines as to their definitions of the ideal. The traditional purveyors of power in classroom settings, White males, communicated a greater comfort level in a 'facilitation model' than the White males in the research class where the dynamics were mediated by the teacher. This is understandable given that the 'facilitation model' would reinforce their place of dominance in the classroom hierarchy. However, the element of positionality must be factored into the study. The students felt that the White male professor did not have an agenda in the seminar class which dealt with issues of race, class, and gender. Yet, they repeatedly referred to the Black woman professor who taught the research class as having a political agenda. Such an analysis does not logically fit the situations and thus we attribute this to the students' perception of the Black woman as a gendered and racialised figure and their perception of the White male professor as a traditional objective disseminator of knowledge without a race, gender, or class position in society. The students wanted more direction from the male professor yet referred to the attempts by the female teacher to make the learning environment participatory with negative comments.

This study showed that the adult education classroom is not the neutral educational site referred to in the literature. Instead it is a duplication of the existing societal relations of power replete with hierarchies and privileges conferred along lines of gender, race, class, sexual orientation and other status markers. The study also suggests that the perspective seen by the teacher is one that is visually impaired by their own viewpoint. During the study, the professors involved practised cultural therapy by examining and discussing their own cultural assumptions and by providing an analysis of what was occurring in the classroom. While many of their suppositions proved consistent with students' views, especially regarding uncomfortable classroom issues, other incidents that seemed trivial to the professors were significant to the students. This would suggest that positionality is a critical lens for interpreting adult education classroom experiences. In sum, we conclude that the facilitation model does not account for the many power dynamics in these classrooms. We suggest further efforts are needed to better understand how societal power relations affect teaching and learning efforts and what responses educators can make to negotiate these issues responsibly.

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'A totally worthwhile experience': mature students, community education and ERASMUS

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A literal interpretation of the phrase 'crossing borders, breaking boundaries' is physical and involves travel. The Commission of the European Union (EU) established the ERASMUS (European Union Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) Chapter of the Socrates programme, together with other schemes promoting transnational mobility, with the manifest intention of breaking down the barriers presented by national borders and promoting understanding and co-operation. In this paper I examine the use of ERASMUS by students who are working towards professionally validated qualifications in youth and community work (YCW), an aspect of community education. Funding from ERASMUS provides students with the opportunity to spend three months in a different EU Member State but what effect does the experience of crossing international boundaries have on the individuals and professional fields involved? I refer to ongoing research concerning the use of ERASMUS by YCW students and also to a recently completed small empirical study concerning mature students from the University College of St Martin, Lancaster, UK who had recently returned from placements in various countries. Quotes from interviews conducted during the latter study are included in the paper.

Structures and institutions

Given the complexity of the inter-relationships concerned in shaping the situation, brief definitions of the various organisations, institutions and structures involved are necessary. In the UK context, the training of future community educators through full-time degree courses which include professional accreditation in YCW, validated by the National Youth Agency (NYA), has been considered in earlier SCUTREA papers. YCW, as a facet of community education, was identified as sharing many features with radical aspects of adult education with particular emphasis on empowerment, reflective practice and education for transformation (Jarvis and Notley 1996; Jones 1996). I build on this identification and focus particularly on mature students on YCW courses. During their courses, students have practical opportunities to engage in one-to-one and group work with both young people and adults: the NYA requires that 40% of course time is spent on fieldwork placements (National Youth Agency 1994). These provide students with vital opportunities to link theory and practice in 'real life' rather than college environments, working alongside professional practitioners. A key aspect of placements is the supervision given by practitioners. They not only act as mentors, presenting models of good technique, but also facilitate students' learning through, for example, highlighting links between theory and practice and promoting reflective practice.

At European level, ERASMUS offers individual full-time undergraduates the opportunity to spend three months living and studying in a different EU Member State. Published data show the majority of participants to be engaged in business studies, foreign languages, law and engineering courses. The percentage studying education and social sciences is very low; Teichler and Maiworm's extensive study of the 1988-9 cohort included individuals in single figures (Teichler and Maiworm 1993). Most participating students spend their time attending a higher education institution in their country of destiny. A minority engages in work experience with an employer. For YCW students, the period is usually used to complete a fieldwork placement in a community-based organisation. ERASMUS participants are mainly aged from 18 - 22 but YCW courses not only require a certain age on entry but also attract a high percentage of mature students. Most of the students involved in the empirical study were aged over 30. Thus the degree area, the activity in which the students engaged and the students themselves are not 'typical' for ERASMUS. Such atypical use of the scheme generates a number of questions. What, for example, are the outcomes of using a scheme which aims to reduce the effects of national borders for fieldwork placements during which students are required to conduct fieldwork within a clear framework of values, skills and knowledge? Is the physical crossing of borders reflected in the crossing of boundaries within individuals' professional practice? And to what extent are the ERASMUS goals of increased understanding and co-operation achieved?

'The opportunity to do something a bit different'

The students in the empirical study saw ERASMUS as offering a unique chance to experience living and working in a different country with a different culture, political structure and institutions; 'to do something a bit different'. They seized the opportunity despite scant information about the professional context or, indeed, the nature of the fieldwork placements they would be undertaking. During their placements they encountered two particular areas of barrier, both broadly related to issues of translation. The first, of course, was linguistic. Few of the students, in common with the majority of UK inhabitants, spoke a second 'official' European language to a sufficient level to be able to complete a placement in that language. Undertaking placements in a person-centred field of work inevitably requires a particularly sophisticated understanding of, and sensitivity to, the nuances of language. Youth and community workers need to be able to understand fully in order to identify accurately what is unacceptable or oppressive before they can challenge effectively. The fact that most students were limited to working in English when in another European country imposed a restriction on the extent to which they could be involved in the NYA's requirement of 'informal education work with young people and adults'. Although those with activity-based skills were able to lead sessions and there was potential for sharing experiences and networking, the nature of the work they could do was inevitably different to what they could undertake in the UK. Currently, the extent to which the concept of alternative modes of communication and awareness of non-verbal forms of communication may be worked into the conduct and assessment of their work is a largely unexplored area. Given that not all interpersonal skills rely wholly on language, it could be suggested that, rather than focusing entirely on linguistic aspects of communication, there could be potential for exploring alternative ways round the barrier.

However, the problems of translation were not only linguistic. Whilst the precise skills, training and qualifications required of a hospital doctor or an architect may vary between Member States, the profession exists in a directly comparable form. This is not the case with the professions which, in the UK, include YCW and adult and continuing education. These share techniques and values and are distinct from social work and from welfare-orientated areas of work. YCW, with its focus on young people and communities does not 'translate' into a profession which is understood by workers in other EU member states. Indeed, it is far from easy to provide a clear and succinct overview of the various professions situated on the continuum of people-centred occupations in the different Member States of the European Union. As with the fields of compulsory and post-compulsory education, each Member State has its own, often assiduously guarded, structures and traditions. The difficulty of comparison has been identified by researchers: in his consideration of the potential for a comparative analysis of the education of adults, Jarvis observed, 'it is ... difficult to compare ... different countries since there is not even agreement among different scholars as to precisely what the phenomenon is!' (Jarvis 1992, 405) He added that certain forms of provision, 'such as social pedagogy and literacy' are regarded in some countries as 'social welfare provision for the needy' whilst elsewhere they are regarded as education (Jarvis 1992, 408). Davies Jones further examined the profession of 'social pedagogue', familiar in many EU states but which 'has no counterpart in Britain'. The precise nature of the profession varies between countries, including areas from adult education to youth work and from residential childcare to therapeutic care work. Considering Europe as a whole, he noted, 'a great variety of mini-professions has been set up with little thought given to the overall professional structure and longer term considerations' (Jones 1994, 19). Each 'mini-profession' brings together different combinations of responsibilities, techniques and philosophies. The fragmented nature of the field should not be seen as the successor to a united and coherent past but rather a response to the different perception of new areas of need in different states. Furthermore, inevitably, each country's professions form distinct hierarchies based on aspects including length and scope of training required and on national attitudes. The lack of any professional area which presents a direct parallel with YCW poses a particular barrier when students attempt to practice the skills, knowledge and values learned in the UK.

The difficulty presented by the disparities between the philosophy and ethos on which the work is founded in the different Member States is more profound than the difficulties posed by language. Not only is the continuum of people-centred work divided up differently in each country but it is constructed on different intellectual traditions and state welfare systems. When workers in related fields in any particular country engage in inter-disciplinary initiatives, they share a general understanding of their differences and of their national context. However, where ERASMUS students are working with organisations in other states, the very lack of awareness of the nature of their different theoretical foundations presents a barrier. Professional terms (which the students termed 'jargon') could not be translated using a dictionary. Although the opportunity to observe and experience alternative models in practice could encourage understanding, the differences in frames of reference are more profound than students in the course of their studies were able to comprehend fully.

The principles underpinning each state's response to youth as an issue and the relationships which characterise the professional field both serve to demonstrate complexities of boundary encountered by ERASMUS students. Chisholm identifies four 'political orientations' within perspectives on youth affairs. These are not mutually exclusive but 'co-exist in varying patterns in each country'. The synthesis of 'social progressivism', 'solidarity and social justice', 'active citizenship' and 'social integration', forms the basis of the professional response to young people (Chisholm 1993). ERASMUS students encountered practice based strongly on a social integrationist approach whilst their own practice is grounded in 'solidarity and social justice'; in challenging 'persistent social inequalities' and, as mentioned earlier, is characterised by aspects shared with radical approaches to adult education. The practice approach is one of the areas of relationship identified by Lorenz. He suggests that the field in mainland Europe is characterised by:

- The relationship with different dominant ideologies and political programmes as mediated by different types of welfare states and welfare regimes ...
- The relationship with different intellectual traditions in social science, psychology and pedagogy as an escape from ideologies ...
- The potential relationship with service users and social movements (Lorenz 1994, 9)

UK YCW emphasises particular values, skills and areas of knowledge. Practical techniques are highly developed. A range of methods is employed to develop effective reflective practitioners. Epistemologically, however, YCW is in its infancy. Whilst it draws from intellectual traditions of the social sciences, the fact that workers are required to demonstrate particular values in practice gives the field an uneasy relationship with traditional empiricist approaches. The overt emphasis on challenging the barriers presented by inequalities, such as those founded on gender, race and sexuality, results in an inherently subjective approach with an identifiable and strong ideology. Debate is emerging concerning the formation of an epistemological foundation for the work. The need has been highlighted (Popple 1995, 102) but discussion around its construction is in its early days. Both standpoint and post-modern epistemologies may be relevant but there is immense scope for exploration. YCW does not seek to 'escape' from ideology but rather to make explicit the relationship between practice and ideology. This suggests a difference with mainland European professions characterised by a social integrationist approach founded on social science traditions with ideology implicit rather than explicit. Furthermore, the language and approach owe more to methods developed in the USA than Europe.

The comparative weakness of YCW's theoretical grounding is thrown into focus when students encounter professionals in other Member States. UK students are knowledgeable concerning the practical impacts of oppression and they have developed skills to use in working with groups and individuals to challenge its manifestations. Supervisors, trained in professional areas with highly developed intellectual traditions in social science, psychology and pedagogy, were impressed by ERASMUS students' practice and sought theoretical explanations beyond those the students were able to offer. The students did not necessarily have the level of understanding to identify the fact that part of the difference they were experiencing was grounded in the fact that their field of work is grounded in a specific ideology whilst the workers in other states have their grounding in academic empiricism or alternative ideologies. This difference did not encourage mutual understanding even where linguistic difficulties were not present. Moreover, the difference in intellectual tradition extends to the ways in which the study of youth issues and young people themselves is formulated: the potential for genuinely transnational (not merely comparative) perspectives has been identified but currently each Member State has its own distinct methodology (Chisholm 1993).

'They asked me, 'What's anti-oppressive practice?''

As indicated, the data I gathered for the empirical study suggested that the difference in professional perspectives was particularly evident when students endeavoured to rehearse their skills in the field of anti-oppressive practice. They found the reaction they encountered was useful since they had to articulate their values and explain their skills and knowledge to an extent which would not be required in the UK. Values had to be put into words which fully explained their nature, sometimes for the first time. Students identified challenging their fellow workers and even their supervisors around issues of racism including the use of stereotyping, jokes and terms offensive in English. They met blanket denials that any problems existed, requiring them to explain the range and diversity of oppression and, at the most fundamental level, why it was of the utmost significance. In one Member State, male students encountered little understanding of the reasons for providing single sex activities for young women and found themselves explaining the nature of sexism in a country with a history of equality of opportunity but where they detected no apparent parity of outcome. Although 'social exclusion' is a phrase found in many EU publications, students perceived little awareness of its impact at grassroots level. In one instance, students encountered workers who focused only on leisure-based provision in 'middle-class areas', who denied the existence of problems of inequality and were dismissive of the needs of the locality's 'poorer people and recent immigrants'. Work with poorer people was seen as an aspect of welfare and not, in this case, the responsibility of social pedagogues; the students did not encounter engagement in projects around empowerment or education for transformation.

In general, the data indicated that, provided students were confident in their personal models of reflective practice, there were many opportunities for them to engage in anti-oppressive work. However, supervision by a practitioner could not be structured in the same way as in the UK. Supervisors could not be expected to act as mentors or to provide a model of good YCW practice although their supportive and often questioning rôle was invaluable. Supervisors' professional theory and practice were not the same as the theory and practice the students were being required to develop although their obvious interest in the thinking behind what they were seeing was a great asset. The questions supervisors asked provided students with opportunities to examine fundamental aspects of their work which, in the UK, would go unremarked.

'If I had had doubts about the validity of youth and community work it took it away'

Whilst ERASMUS is intended to break down barriers, YCW students identified how the different perspective resulted in new insights into their own practice. Chisholm identifies similar reasons for undertaking comparative research; 'deeper understanding of one's own society and culture by accessing external points of reference, improving the workings of one's own society and culture by learning or borrowing from others; and positioning or ranking one's own society and culture against others in relation to dimensions of development and performance'(Chisholm 1995, 21). However, students did not only gain a different perspective. Their experiences resulted in a strengthened confidence in the validity of YCW and in a conviction that UK practice was 'ahead' rather than 'different', especially with regard to anti-oppressive practice. Paradoxically, ERASMUS had led to a reinforcement of professional boundaries and the creation, amongst the participants, of a hierarchy.

There is a tendency amongst UK workers to assume that their model is better in some way. This is supported by the fact that the emphasis on the understanding and challenging of oppression, with particular focus on racism, is perceived by workers based in the UK to be more developed in the UK. This attitude denies the well-developed understanding of, for example, xenophobia, in certain states. It also ignores the way in which each country's discourse is shaped by its particular interplay between culture and history (Taylor 1994). Again, issues of language, terminology and translation affect the way the subject is addressed and can undermine comprehension. Nonetheless, the ERASMUS students, all of whom were white, perceived a lack of understanding of racism and even encountered denial of its existence. They endeavoured to explain such concepts but, for many people in other Member States, the UK's credibility on all social matters is epitomised by the government's opt-out from the Social Chapter.

'A totally worthwhile experience'

The ERASMUS students stressed the value of their placements, giving individual personal development as the key feature. Experiential learning, such as that experienced during placements, both challenges and changes people (Woolfe 1992) and it is clear that the ERASMUS placements offered such opportunities. Teichler and Maiworm found:

> former ERASMUS students clearly rated the general impacts, i.e. those on personal development and ways of thinking, as most important ... many ... view themselves, or explicitly say they are viewed by others, as very capable of coping with unexpected situations, persons not previously known, etc., and that they are considered to be more flexible in their ways of thinking and acting (Teichler and Maiworm 1993, 67-8).

The ability to deal with unexpected situations and to think and act flexibly are qualities explicitly required in youth and community workers and are aspects which placements are designed to foster. The students also reported being strengthened in their understanding of, and belief in the importance of, YCW. Furthermore, the practical experience of living as 'an outsider' is valuable to future workers in their understanding of oppression.

The effect on YCW as a profession was two-fold. First, focus was thrown on the highly developed practical skills and knowledge together with the values on which the work is built. This was essentially positive; the perspective was validated. Secondly however, the weakness of the profession's epistemological basis was highlighted. There are several possible responses. The latter point has been identified and discussion and research are taking place which will build relevant theory although such processes take time. In addition, given increasing globalisation, it could be suggested that work with young people and communities needs future community educators whose perspective is as broad as possible. Alternatively, the paradoxical increasing emphasis on the local could suggest that concentration should be on work with identifiable local communities; on building on existing strengths and that training should reflect this.

Currently, discussion continues on the broad issues while individuals continue to take the opportunity to gain the new perspectives on themselves and their practice afforded by spending time living and working in a different Member State. Nonetheless, the data suggest that the aims of ERASMUS may not be achieved; the physical barriers may be crossed but increased understanding of different countries might actually reinforce belief in YCW: the boundaries of the profession are strengthened. Although a contradiction, the experience of living and working in a different state appeared to reinforce students' confidence in the validity of the UK's model of YCW and particularly in its emphasis on challenging inequalities. In conclusion, however, consideration must be given to the students who emphasised how they had had the opportunity to understand 'the impact of the training', to gain confidence in their developing critical praxis and, above all, to participate in what one identified as 'a totally worthwhile experience'.

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Epistemology of groups as learning systems: a research-based analysis

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There is a growing recognition that the complex challenges created by an increasingly interdependent world are more effectively met by groups of people than by individuals working alone. This recognition spurs a quest to better understand how groups learn. To conceptualise a group as a learning system, rather than as a collectivity of individual learning systems, requires a significant shift in meaning perspective about human boundaries. Western cultural tradition is deeply rooted in concepts of self and individualism, creating habits of mind that make this shift difficult.

Current theories about learning construe the learner as an individual. Adult educators have long based their practice on the belief that individual learning is supported by group participation, but they have not conceptualised the group itself as a learner (Imel 1996) and are likely to consider 'the term group learning to be an oxymoron' (Armstrong and Yarbrough 1996, 33). Only recently have some adult educators begun to assert the importance of group learning (Armstrong and Yarbrough 1996; Cranton 1996; Dechant, Marsick, and Kasl 1993; Imel and Tisdell 1996), and to analyse how group learning is different from group dynamics (Armstrong and Yarbrough 1996; Kasl, Marsick, and Dechant in press). We contend that a theory and practice of group learning could contribute significantly to adult educators' capacity to re-envision learning for today's world.

The purpose of this paper is to begin to formulate an epistemology of group learning on which adult educators might base a pedagogy of group learning. By epistemology, we mean a description of the fundamental relationship between the knower and the known (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Heron 1996). Thus, we ask the epistemological question, 'What is the relationship between the group as a knowing system and what the group knows?' as well as the pedagogical correlate, 'How does a group as a knowing system come to know what it knows?'

Method

Herein, we discuss our analysis of published case studies of 'group learning'. This term is often used to refer to individual learning that is supported by a group. Although important, this phenomenon was not our focus as we scanned the literature for descriptions of group learning. The definition that guided our search is that group learning is indicated when all members perceive themselves as having contributed to a group outcome, and all members of the group can individually describe what the group as a system knows.

To examine the question 'How does a group as a knowing system come to know what it knows?' we began with a set of analytic categories that we derived from learning-from-experience literature (Boud, Cohen, and Walker 1993; Schön 1983), from transformative or emancipatory learning literature (Elias in press; Group for Collaborative Inquiry 1994; Mezirow 1991), and from our own work on group learning (Dechant, Marsick, and Kasl 1993). We searched for information about multiple ways of knowing or holistic modes of engagement, and for descriptions of action, reflection, and experimentation. We remained alert to information other than our initial categories, in particular to insights into the phenomenological experience associated with the boundaries related to individual ego and group identity. We also looked systematically at contextual variables: group purpose, formation and composition, the larger system in which the group is embedded, role and process of facilitation, time frame, and the group's learning outcomes.

Many of these reports were created for purposes other than our own, so we were dependent on the richness of the author(s)' descriptions of the group's context and learning strategies. When the author(s) favoured interpretation or conceptual analysis over description, we were less able to interrogate the research report for answers to our own questions. Our selection of cases was limited by time and accessibility. Thus, we perceive our review as a beginning in the creation of an epistemology for group learning and a preliminary step in suggesting an agenda for further research.

The twenty case studies for this analysis come from reports of group learning in three different contexts. Seven describe learning in the workplace where the team has been vested with a management or problem-solving task (Brooks 1994; Gavan 1996; John 1995; Kasl, Marsick and Dechant in press; Lynn 1995; Lynn, Morone, and Paulson 1996; Marsick 1990). Two describe the learning experienced by research teams: one reporting on a health project evaluation by community-based women (Whitmore 1994) and the other reporting on our own research team (Kasl, Dechant, and Marsick 1993). Eleven describe the learning experienced by co-operative or collaborative inquiry groups (Bray 1995; De Venney-Tiernan *et al.* 1994; Gerdau 1995; Reason 1988; Sartor 1997; Smith 1995; thINQ in press; Traylen 1994; Yorks 1995; Zelman 1995). Group size ranged from three to twenty. With the exception of four groups, members were typically upper-middle-class professionals and were more often white than of colour. There are three cases from Great Britain, one from Australia, one from Canada, and fifteen from the United States.

Group purpose, formation, and setting

Before describing the ways in which our case study groups learned, we report on important differences associated with context. The seven workplace case studies describe the learning experiences of intact organisational work teams, cross-functional groups, or special purpose groups created to develop new products. The two case studies that describe research teams are reports of those teams' own learning about themselves as a team. The remaining eleven case studies describe the learning experienced by collaborative or co-operative inquiry groups. Collaborative/co-operative inquiry is a research method (Heron 1996; Reason 1994; thINQ in press) in which groups of individuals investigate a topic of interest to each member, through the systematic execution of a number of cycles of action and reflection during which the data gathered from each group member's personal life experience become the data for answering the inquiry question.

There are fundamental differences between organisational work teams and collaborative inquiry groups with regard to group purpose and formation. In co-operative or collaborative inquiry, group members are invited to participate and participation is voluntary; often the initiator is a peer. The norms of inquiry groups (Heron 1996; Reason 1994; thINQ in press) demand functional equality among participants and define the group's purpose as a learning endeavour. Members of the inquiry group define for themselves what the group's inquiry question will be. Topics often have practical application for the participants' professional lives or personal development. In contrast, organisational work groups are assigned a purpose by the larger organisation; participation is often also assigned.

Although seven of the eleven case studies of collaborative inquiry groups were convened in a workplace setting, these contextual differences in group formation and group purpose are critical. We speculate in a limited way about the effect of these contextual differences because of the way in which setting is confounded with formation and purpose. We imagine that when participation is voluntary, it is more likely that group members come to the table in a spirit of openness that enables them to listen well to others' points of view and to question their own frames of reference in a non defensive way. Here, voluntariness is confounded with setting. We suggest further research — that studies be conducted in workplace settings when participation is voluntary, and inquiry group settings when participation is required. Of the seven organisational work group cases, six are in product-oriented, corporate settings. Of the seven collaborative inquiry groups that were convened in a workplace setting, all are in service-oriented contexts, associated either with education or health care. Thus, organisational cultural differences further confound our data.

Group learning strategies

In turning now to a discussion of learning strategies. we focus on the findings that are most directly related to the epistemology of group learning.

Action/reflection cycles

Most cases provide rich description of action/reflection cycles, although in three cases the rhythm of the action/reflection is different from what the group initiator anticipated. In these cases, groups stayed in a prolonged period of action before reflecting on what could be learned from their actions. Two of these (Smith 1995; Traylen 1994) were composed of community women for whom reflection was less comfortable than action; the third was a group of university faculty and administrators whose project began as a co-operative inquiry but soon evolved more into the shape of action research (Yorks 1995). Cases that did not show much reflection describe workplace teams (Gavan 1996; John 1995).

Finding meaning, not forcing it

Various strategies for taking a group outside analytic modes of knowing stimulated group learning. Some established norms of story-telling (Smith 1995; Treleaven 1994), some created experiential exercises (Marsick 1990; Reason 1988; Zelman 1995) or captured their learning through art and metaphor (Bray 1995; Gerdau 1995). In other cases, groups discovered that important insights grew from getting 'off task,' that is, engaging in associational thinking that on the surface seemed not to be moving their agendas forward (Kasl, Dechant and Marsick 1993; Kasl, Marsick and Dechant in press; Marsick 1990).

Keeping faith in the midst of chaos and ambiguity

Closely related to a group's capacity to appreciate the value of associational thinking is its understanding that chaos and ambiguity are intrinsic to generative learning. Premature attempts to impose order or analytic clarity can prevent the group from breaking out of limited perspectives. This capacity is much more readily achieved in collaborative/co-operative inquiry groups than in organisational work teams. Groups perceive that their managers are more interested in timely results than in generative ideas (Brooks 1994; John 1995); the nature of the problem itself channels members into routinised ways of thinking that hamper out-of-the-box thinking (Gavan 1996); group members may find it difficult to step outside a results orientation long enough to learn outside existing frames of reference, even if they are told that they can do so (Marsick 1990).

Going public

With the two evaluation teams and a few inquiry group cases, preparing to share the group's knowledge with an audience outside the group was a catalyst for learning. The process of preparing interim oral reports for outside funding agents consolidated learning for two groups of community women. Experiencing respectful appreciation from their audiences precipitated in the women new respect for the importance of their work as well as growing self confidence (Smith 1995; Whitmore 1994). When groups prepared written reports, the process of reflecting on written words uncovered differences in perspectives that had not before been visible, and served as an impetus for further learning. (De Venney-Tiernan *et al.* 1994; Kasl, Dechant, and Marsick, 1993; Sartor 1997; thINQ in press; Whitmore 1994). Workplace teams experienced the preparation of reports for managers or clients as an impetus for learning. In all cases, the act of going public was associated with a deadline, and therefore forced the group into an accelerated process of confirming the knowledge it had been creating.

Embracing difference, learning from conflict

All groups faced the inevitable challenges created by interpersonal conflict and individual differences. One group of community women who had been working together for some time without being able to communicate across ethnic and racial differences found that the context of collaborative inquiry helped them discuss the effect of these differences on their relationships, and then bridge them (Smith 1995). Another group struggled to cross the deep divide of class (Whitmore 1994). Several groups had a pivotal incident in their development in which the resolution of a deep interpersonal difference catalysed the group toward new levels of learning (Bray 1995; Kasl, Marsick and Dechant in press; Marsick 1990; Yorks 1995) or inhibited further learning (Brooks 1994; Gavan 1996).

Reconceptualising time

The distinction between learning and task in relation to group purpose is paramount. Groups formed primarily for the purpose of inquiry are more able to implement some of the learning strategies that facilitate group learning. When groups perceive themselves to be created to address a particular task, the pressure of task accomplishment makes group learning difficult. Workplace learning is understood primarily as a means to develop employees so that they can work more effectively in the future, or in order to produce a more innovative solution to a challenge that cannot easily be addressed by individuals who work on their own. To the often-cited tension described in the group dynamics literature between task and process, we add the tension of valuing learning for its own sake versus enhanced productivity.

This tension between learning and output is highly evident in the way in which time is experienced by the group. We suggest that group learning is enhanced when groups learn to reconceptualise time as a resource because they can then: generate ideas for which relevance is not immediately apparent; cycle back and forth between action and reflection, taking time to develop skilfulness with reflection; and create a context for shared history that leads to new ways of thinking, feeling, or acting. Research reports support our hypothesis, but also suggest that groups experience difficulty in reconceptualising time in this way if members perceive their focus primarily as getting the job done, and if nothing is done to assist members to think about time differently.

The group as a knowing system

In what way does our analysis of these twenty case studies advance our understanding of the epistemology of group learning as we define it herein? Learning groups break out of explicit and implicit views of their purpose as clearly defined, limited, and instrumental. To do so, members must often re-conceive their own understanding of self as contributor. Pedagogy can assist in this kind of breakthrough. However, this often requires that someone within the group, or attached to it as a facilitator, holds a vision of working together in broader, critical, collaborative ways; and by dint of authority that is natural or ascribed, creates a space within which members experience collaborative thinking and experimentation.

Our data show us that a group who stays together for several months can move back and forth among different purposes. At times, for example, groups might be characterised primarily by action, support, problem solving, or generative learning. We think that the dynamics of learning vary with purpose. However, once groups have begun to think deeply together, they can access these capacities even when purpose might not necessarily spur such thinking. We observe that even when the inquiry groups in our sample convened for purposes of creating instrumental learning, they also engaged communicative learning and often experienced emancipatory learning (Cranton 1996; Mezirow 1991).

Social interdependence theory has much to offer to our understanding of group learning. The epistemology of individual learning describes individual motivation and learning dynamics. The social environment plays a key role in what and how an individual learns, but the individual's success in learning goals or products affects the individual more than the group as a whole. In group learning, the system as a whole cannot benefit fully unless individuals see their fate as intertwined with the learning success of others. Group learning is enhanced when characteristics of the group, the group's task, group membership, and the environment in which the group is located motivate, enable, and reinforce social interdependence.

We began this report by observing that to conceptualise a group as a learning system, rather than as a collectivity of individual learning systems, requires a significant shift in meaning perspective about human boundaries. We conclude by observing that the cultivation of the knowing system requires attention to development of the system's full capacities — capacities for analytic thinking, intuitive and somatic apprehension, affective expression, and spirit.

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Elitist boundaries and the impact of privilege: adult higher education research and policy

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In the last twenty years, higher education has experienced dramatic growth in adult higher education enrolments. In the most recent comparative international statistics, the following countries reported approximately one-third or higher representation of adults (ages 25 or older) in undergraduate studies: Sweden (65.9%), China (49%), Finland (47.2%), Norway (45%), United States (41%), Australia (40.3%), and United Kingdom (32.8%) (Kasworm 1993). Yet, research and policy studies in both adult and higher education have predominantly excluded consideration of adult learners in higher education contexts. Key issues of adult learning in formal settings, of access standards, of complex credentialism and related assessment strategies, and of adult involvement through intermittent enrolment patterns and non-standard programmes or delivery systems of higher education have been ignored. In addition, many adult educators abhor incorporating the privileging bureaucracies of colleges and universities and the dogmatic traditional academic instructional forms and modes of delivery into their practice. While adult learners are involved in higher education learning systems, they are at best ignored, if not denounced as objects of control by the adult education research community. Researchers of both higher and adult education have also avoided critical analysis of the extremely varied and complex natures of adult learners and the diversity of adult collegiate settings. For those who pursue simplistic discussions of adult learners, there are often bifurcated visions of adult learners as either second class citizens who fill in the cracks of need for higher education or as idealised self-actualising learners who can prevail above the dogmatism and petty bureaucracies of the university. Though adult learners in higher education are key members of academic communities, their uniqueness of identity, participation, and contributions are often ignored or are misconstrued by the higher education practitioner and research communities and unfortunately, also by many adult education researchers.

Elitist paradigms of universities do impact the life and welfare of adult higher education students. Elitist boundaries and privileging environments of higher education have influenced the lack of voice and substantive research and policy of adult higher education. This paper will suggest four key themes from an analysis of current literature in relation to future research and policy. These themes consider 1) the naming of the adult student, 2) the symbol of the adult college student in a Learning Society, 3) the nature of adult-oriented systems, and 4) paradox of the adult being part of the world. Although these discussions will reflect a predominant expression of the USA scene, these issues are also present in many other international higher education settings.

Naming of the adult student

A key issue for all policy and research in adult higher education is the labelling and categorising of the adult student. Adult students in higher education have been labelled with many different identifiers including non-traditional student, mature student, re-entry student, and second choice student. When we deconstruct these terms, these labels and categories suggest those who are *outsiders*, those who are *non-normative*, and those who are *excluded from the dominant cultural circle*. The terms are used to communicate an assumption of a uniform world of higher education with values and attitudes which reflect the historically traditional characteristics of younger and more privileged students, of the original and continuous entrant, and of the student who is the 'first choice' actor in higher education.

Although some would suggest this labelling of the adult student in higher education has been used as a device to create specialised services and attention, the naming of the adult student has also been an institutional statement of the marginality and 'otherness' of the adult student. Practitioners and researchers speak to the everyday confusion of these varied terms and their operational application to groupings. Adult students also often face confusion regarding their place in the academy and in identifying supportive personnel and services. This issue of 'naming the object of the adult student and his/her world' is not discussed in most literature or addressed in policy. There are no critiques of the naming and labelling of adult student groupings in higher education and of the broader issues of social policy impacting the power structure categorising adults as a special grouping or groupings who participate in higher education. There have been no examinations of the perceptual impact of these labels nor of these categories on the functional engagement or distancing of adults in higher education. Policy and research needs to address these areas of concern and provide new perspectives translated into empowering words and images for the adult learner in higher education.

Symbol of the adult student

In the last twenty years, many have proposed the symbols of the Learning Society and lifelong learning as metaphors for all individuals, for all forms of knowledge and knowing, and for all possibilities of access and participation. However, it is the rare speaker and text which suggests that the Learning Society reflects a revolution which will transform higher education to serve the whole of society, much less to be more equitable in serving adult students. For example, recent books by key leaders in higher education (Boyer 1987 and Bok 1990), recent efforts by the Carnegie Commission, Pew Charitable Trust, and Kellogg Foundation, as well as other higher education think tank groups present only circumscribed interests of a learning society. These forums deal with the hot topic issues within the academy: funding, efficiency, tenure, accountability, and future viability. The place of student, the creation of permeable structures and policies to support adult students, and the voice of students in the decision-making are not typically part of their agendas of discussion. Key literature in adult education looks to other organisations, programmes, and activities beyond higher education to discuss the future of the Learning Society. It would appear that adult education does not perceive adult higher education as sufficiently egalitarian, open and innovative for future learning efforts, while higher education is concerned about survival of traditional forms and structures. And in readings of European higher and adult education, a similar lack of analysis and discussion is evident.

These individuals and groups do not speak to the challenges of a Learning Society which should serve the advanced and specialised learning needs of adults in collaboration with higher education settings. Although many speak to university and business collaborations for economic development, rarely do they speak to the individual adult student needs, desires, and impact for higher learning. As suggested by House and Howe (1990), our current commitments in a liberal democratic society are more often voicing the desire for equality of opportunity, rather than creating systems and policies to support equality of results. We need to be mindful that individuals come with unequal resources and opportunities to access institutions and systems of power and control. A Learning Society should consider how best to serve all levels of knowledge needs and all conditions of life.

Although some have suggested that the adult student may be the hope and the promise of the future Learning Society, it is evident that the ideal does not change prejudicial attitudes and institutional boundaries of exclusion. The adult student presents the significant contradictions of the ideals of equitable, open systems for the Learning Society, while operating with hegemonic tribes who control programmes, services and access to specialised learning. Adult students also symbolise the current life realities of an information society as it impacts upon an individual's sense of self efficacy and place. There are dramatic transformations in our society regarding the nature and role of knowledge, the alternative ways of accessing knowledge and expertise, and the ephemeral and shifting expectations for knowledge competence in the workplace, in the home, and in society. As suggested by Rifkin in *The End of Work*,

> Workers with years of education, skills and experience face the very real prospect of being made redundant by the new forces of automation and information ... In a 1994 survey conducted by the New York Times, two out of every five American workers expressed worry that they might be laid off, required to work reduced hours, or be forced to take pay cuts during the next years. Seventy-seven percent of the respondents said they personally knew of someone who had lost his or her job in the last few years' (1995, 12-13).

These threats to individual economic security and the transformation of economic life of society reflect not only economic and personal concerns, they reflect a major linkage with knowledge and higher education credentials. Business and industry are defining the lack of advanced knowledge credentials as one form of redundancy and using the oppressive forces of performance appraisal to echo the necessity of higher educational validation of knowledge and skills (Kasworm 1997). These adult workers experience the hypocrisy, the hegemonic structures, attitudes, and judgements of knowledge control and evaluation. Many believe there is collusion of employers with higher educational institutions to suppress their access and participation in higher education. They question why the screening and controlling of university applicants creates 'advantaged and privileged' access for needed credentials.

Adult higher education students truly symbolise the hopes and dilemmas of a Learning Society. They reflect the actions of reaching out to the ideals of full access, robust and passionate learning and creative and empowering learning environments. Yet, these adult learners experience societal power structures and policies related to selective forms of knowledge and learning validation, of highly idiosyncratic systems of knowledge learning, and of fiefdoms of policies to exclude the diversity of experiences of adult students.

As noted in Kasworm (1993, 411), 'Adult participation in higher education has come to symbolise one important aspect of the 'learning society', a belief that individual and societal vitality is nourished and sustained by lifelong learning and recurrent education'. If policy and research truly considered the promises and the reality of the adult learner in higher education, the future realities of access, of diverse participation, and of quality learning should be evident. It would present the symbol of the individual and collective adult learners in this Learning Society who can utilise higher education while acting within their many worlds of personal learning — families, work environments, communities, and global citizenship.

Adult-oriented systems and policies

There are numerous volumes of descriptive and prescriptive discussions of systems, policies, and practices surrounding adult student involvement in higher education. These discussions represent multi-levels of analyses of the individual learner, programmes of study, the institution, and the related governing and funding structures of state or national perspective. However, this literature is a confusing mosaic of idiosyncratic perspectives and of translated shapes and processes designed by highly variable external and internal forces. More often, these discussions consider the unique, the innovative, and, if you will, the aberrant. And these discussions often suggest an oppositional stance, because the norm is more often prejudicial and hostile to adult students (Kasworm 1990).

The majority of adult-oriented policies and systems have been created apart from the normative higher education society. To provide access, place, and support for adult students, educators have had to create 'one's own place' of identity and of a different reality. Within the United States, our institutional governance structures are dominant with minimal state or national intervention for policy. Thus, adult learner systems and policies represent specialised and more often marginalised programmes, policies, and support structures highly dependent upon current institutional contexts, individual risk-taking, and precarious financial support. Adult higher education has often valued benign neglect of the power structures to continue its own policy and resources for opening small windows of opportunity through the barriers and boundaries of the traditional institutional mind-set.

Beyond the personal, the specific, and the individual condition, the future of adult-oriented systems and support come from the broader landscape of adult higher education and the more fundamental issues which impede the adult learner. I commend to you the edited volume by Pat Davies (1995) which presents the current status of adult higher education access and participation in eleven differing countries. In addition, I point to my recent article in the *International Encyclopaedia* (Kasworm 1993) which also attempts to provide a brief overview, organisation, and related international literature.

What are the key landscape conflictual and supporting forces for the future of adult-oriented policies and systems? The future of research and policy for adult systems reflects the broad external forces which will impact and possibly change the role, function, and belief systems of higher education. One catalyst is the marketplace which now challenges our institutions to become more adult-oriented and adult relevant. Knowledge is power and profitability. The market place needs higher educational institutions to be part of this information age. Davies suggests '...there is no doubt that a considerable struggle is taking place for control of the mission and function of higher education and that adults are at the centre of that struggle' (1995, 288). For Davies and the European scene of policy makers and researchers as well as others throughout the world, the economics of the marketplace are a pivotal external focus for innovation and flexibility in serving adult learners.

Another catalyst is the growing demands of our student population of 43% adult undergraduates of 25 years of age and older, of part-time students reflecting 64% of our student population, 90% of commuting [non-residential] students, and 65% of undergraduates [both young and old] working 20 or more hours a week (Kasworm 1997). These demographics of students continue to push the modification of access, scheduling, modularisation, and delivery systems for learning. With this push, other adults continue to be denied access because of limited prior education, of geographic placement, of life circumstances, of financial limitations, and of self beliefs.

There are many continuing issues of recognition and permeability of prior learning outside of higher education, as well as 'transfer' of prior learning from one institution to the next institution (Abrahamsson, Rubenson, and Slowey 1988; Davies 1995; Kasworm 1993, Stephens 1990). There has been limited recognition and discussion of the 'horizontal diversity' between and within both divisions within universities as well as between university and non-university institutions of higher education who serve adult learners. We have become caught up in semantics to describe these different worlds of validation and systems of sponsorship, creation, and delivery, rather than of learning outcomes and knowledge. Further, there are still many prejudices experienced by individuals who desire to transfer from one academic programme or institution to the next related to credit course work, its 'validity' for a particular curriculum and institution, and the equivalency of courses for faculty-defined programme expectations of course offerings.

Although adult higher education research and policy development has historically focused greater concern on the access and entry participation issues, there continue to be limited critiques on issues of 'vertical diversity access and participation' of policy and practice within higher education institutions. Recent literature is highly speculative about participation in varied delivery systems and programmes (nature, duration, and kinds), about the nature of credit sanctioning and validation, and about the impact of alternative delivery systems of modularised, accelerated, and distance learning options (Abrahamsson, Rubenson, and Slowey 1988; Davies 1995; Kasworm 1993, Stephens 1990). This area is particularly challenged by the burgeoning forms of electronic learning options, such as virtual courses, programmes, and on-line education institutions. Future research and policy studies need to target how collaborative efforts can support and create further vertical and horizontal diversity, and how these systems are adult-oriented and adult supportive. We speak to the importance of adult-oriented systems, yet the voices of adults and the values of institutional support are not reflected in our literature and policy.

Being on the borders: paradox of being in the world versus being apart from the world

Being on the borders of the privileging élites of higher education for adult students reflects yet another significant paradox. Future research and policy should formally address the nature of valid constructs of knowledge structures for adults who live in many life worlds and who make meaning across many different knowledge worlds. These adults experience and operate in many forms of knowledge: knowledge of life, knowledge of work, knowledge of relationships, and knowledge of disciplinary content.

In my current research of adult undergraduate meaning-making (Kasworm 1997), adult students presented five beliefs structures of engagement in learning. These belief structures reflected constructs of real world and academic knowledge and their interrelationships, beliefs of socio-political power transactions related to knowledge between instructors and students, and negotiated understandings of actions of knowledge for both the classroom and the adult life worlds. At the heart of this paradox was the nature of situated and contextualised learning and knowledge structures. Most students believed that they could only operate with one set of knowledge structures or another set at any one point in time; they believed that there was only one type of knowledge which was viable within specific contextual settings. Many also placed judgements of value and relevancy upon these differing knowledge structures, thus the learning experience was a continuous judgement act of personally relevant and meaningful knowledge based within specific worlds of actions (Lave and Wenger 1991; Lave 1993). The most fascinating revelations in this study occurred with adult students in liberal arts courses and in professional school courses — where issues of theory and practice had both sharp as well as vague and transparent beliefs regarding 'what was valid academic knowledge' for adult meaning and action.

Another key area of this border paradox targets the role of adult learning assessment and outcomes. Assessment for outcomes often challenges the élitist boundaries of course credentialling. It also challenges the role of critical reflection and situated application in the world. Adult programmes which make extensive use of critical reflection, of situated learning, and of connecting beliefs of experiences embedded in theoretical frames walk this tightrope of being both part of the academy and part of the world — an unholy alliance. From another vantage point, portfolio assessment through CAEL and other APEL programmes consider the notions of 'academically equivalent knowledge' gained through other world actions and documented by elaborate validation systems. In much of the policy and research discussions of both adult and higher education, assessment systems continue to have difficulty speaking to issues of adultness and maturity. They have difficulty with incorporating contexts and perspective frames. They only focus upon the concrete and the known. Although a few organisations and groups in adult education have discussed these ideas and begun to formulate actions, we are slow to act upon these ideas of assessment and to model and promote broad applications and beliefs of the adult as a self-directing, maturing, lifelong learner.

Future research and policy should bring together the worlds of adult higher education, of work, of family, and of community for adult learners. Adult learners should not feel that they are boundary spanning many cultures which do not recognise each other's existence. These acts of future research and policy development, should continue to challenge the hegemonic belief systems that formal adult learning can only occur within the boundaries of the privileged ethnocentric controls of elite policy makers and the historical bureaucracies of traditional higher education. There is need to bring together being both part and apart from the world for adult learners.

Summary

The future of adult higher education rests in the hands of practitioners, researchers and policy makers within adult education and in those hands of higher educators who have come to place themselves within the frame of adult learning. This current discussion challenges the future roles and directions of researchers and policy-makers to be visible, active, and critically involved in the future of adult learning in the academy.

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Vocational education and really useful knowledge

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This paper will discuss some of the ways in which it is possible to break, or at least extend, the boundaries between vocational education and education for really useful knowledge. The paper is based upon work that I have done to investigate the development of critical awareness in vocational education. Vocational education is usually explicitly concerned with preparing participants to fulfil the expectations resulting from their social position but I believe that it also contains the potential for providing really useful knowledge where:

> Really useful knowledge is knowledge calculated to make you free. (Johnson 1988, 22).

When vocational education includes a critical examination of the basis of instrumental knowledge it can then be said to have the potential to provide emancipatory or really useful knowledge and to be crossing its traditional borders. This is possible precisely because vocational courses do relate directly to participants' lives; this relevance creates the opportunity for critical examination of assumptions resulting in the development of new understandings which, in turn, can lead to the development of critical consciousness or awareness. Although the motivations of adults entering education and training are complex and varied there are indications that vocational students are looking for really useful knowledge and my research investigated whether such knowledge was being provided in vocational education. There were many difficulties in such an investigation and the research has raised many issues but this paper will concentrate only on a discussion of the ways in which vocational education could provide an education which extends the current boundaries or borders of education for working class people.

There is a massive distance between the borders of academic and vocational education within the UK; the much discussed academic/vocational divide reflects the boundaries of the class system. It is still largely the case that an individual's location within these educational boundaries is a function of their race, class and gender positions; consequently most working class adults receiving education are receiving vocational education. There is also a clear boundary within adult education between education for critical awareness and vocational education. The detail of the attempts in adult education, in the UK, Europe and America, to develop really useful knowledge through a radicalising, critical education are well documented, but there is no equivalent literature or discussion in vocational education. Vocational education has been consistently ignored, under-resourced, under-funded, under-developed and under-researched. The history of the development of vocational education in the UK is essentially the history of the development of an increasingly narrowly focused instrumental training for working class people, in contrast to the European systems of vocational education which provide a much broader based education. The British debates about the merits of a narrowly based skills training compared with those of a more broadly based vocational education and indeed those debates about the merits of a liberal education as compared with a scientific or technical education are still unresolved. The key issues in much of the British literature about vocational education are the merits or problems of competence based education and training and the introduction of the national framework of vocational qualifications; insufficient attention has been paid to the content and, therefore, to the boundaries of the vocational education currently delivered. The discussion in this paper is located within this broader UK discussion which in turn reflects much larger discussions about the effects of race, class and gender.

In the UK, vocational education for working class people is provided within further education (FE) colleges. Vocational and adult education provision, particularly for women, is not consistent as it reflects the vagaries of the labour market and different funding regimes. Women form the 'reserve army' for educational provision as they are the 'reserve army' for the labour market. Within adult education, provision, particularly for Access and related courses, appears — on the basis of reported difficulties in recruitment and changes in funding — to have peaked for now; FE colleges remain heavily financially dependent on working class women because of the funding regimes, but I would argue that their provision does not match women's needs and aspirations.

Currently vocational education provision is defined by and based upon the National Council for Vocational Education formulation of competence based education and training (CBET). There is ample evidence to show that CBET, in the guise of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) and General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQs), fails because it does not meet policy expectations, because of its inadequate theoretical formulation and because of practical difficulties (see, for example, Ashworth 1992; Field 1995; Hyland 1994; Robinson 1996). Furthermore, CBET is predicated on instrumental rationality and this is a fundamental weakness; the content of the specifications facilitates ideological control (Kilminster 1994); CBET is also used as a tool for controlling work-forces by its incorporation as a tool in human management resource strategies. Funding requirements mean that students undertaking vocational courses, particularly those in such 'women's areas' as secretarial studies, health and social care, hairdressing and so on, have to take competence based courses; indeed, a recent report (Robinson 1996) has shown that the majority of NVQs have been awarded in the service sector.

Therefore the current (and historical) context for vocational education, particularly for those working class people in search of a really useful education, is bleak. However, before doing my research I knew, both through my own experiences and those that other women had commented on, that new and radical understandings could develop through vocational education. Consequently, my own research, conducted whilst I was working in FE, was concerned with examining the processes by which working class women in FE gained these new and more 'inclusive, discriminatory and integrative understanding(s)' (Mezirow 1991) — or really useful knowledge.

Discussions in the adult education literature, about facilitating the development of critical awareness tend to concentrate on process and the use of personal experience rather than the use of revelatory or useful knowledge (for example Brookfield 1987; Mezirow 1990) and this can be a weakness of radical education for working class people. Although personal experience is an essential part of learning there are limits to the value of both personal and collective experience in learning, as Hart points out:

> Personal experience can only be the necessary *point of departure* for gaining socially valid knowledge; it cannot itself constitute the whole universe of such knowledge. (Hart 1990, 67).

Socially valid knowledge is theoretical and provides the context for, and distance from, personal experiences that is necessary in order to develop an understanding of the relationships between different aspects of one's own experience and those of others. Socially valid knowledge could, for example, involve learning about inequalities in health and is what I have been referring to as useful or revelatory knowledge. Socially valid knowledge is not usually available within the vocational education system and certainly not in the competence based courses as currently specified. Therefore, it can only be gained on the initiative of the teacher; one of the dangers with the highly prescriptive nature of NVQs and GNVQs is that they reduce and circumscribe the opportunities for teachers to mediate their content. The importance of such revelatory or socially valid knowledge for developing a more 'inclusive, discriminatory and integrative under-standing' cannot be underestimated because it provides the necessary framework with which to make sense of experience. It is that knowledge, described by Hughes (1995), that links the cultural, scientific and practical and derives its curriculum from the interests of students, thereby enabling them to understand and so to challenge their oppressions.

The problem with much vocational education, particularly since the introduction of CBET, is that it often does not provide or encourage the acquisition of this socially valid knowledge because

> the social world is presented and accepted as a natural phenomenon. For too long [vocational] education has submerged its students in a situation in which critical awareness and response are practically impossible. (Harden 1996, 32).

Harden is actually discussing nurse education here and she argues that nurse educators are both oppressed and oppressors; oppressed by nurses' position within the medical hierarchy as well as (often) by their gender position and oppressors because they deliver an education that emphasises instrumentalism at the expense of criticality. This is also true for educators within all vocational education, certainly in the 'women's areas' but also generally. Most further education vocational teachers have themselves been oppressed by their social position (and this is reflected within the further education college hierarchies) but in turn are also oppressors because they are delivering an education that suppresses criticality. Therefore, although it is possible to gain really useful knowledge through vocational education, it is apparent that its current structure and context mediate strongly against this possibility.

My research attempted to address three related issues in order to understand more clearly how to encourage critical awareness in vocational education. The first problem was the issue of how to evaluate critical awareness and the other two questions concerned whether there was any evidence of critical awareness among vocational education students and what effect, if any, competence based education has on this. Despite the methodological difficulties in assessing changes in understandings some of my research findings do have implications for teaching for critical awareness and therefore for changing the boundaries of vocational education. I found that working class women's definitions of significant learning gained through their college courses prioritised wider experiences and increased understandings together with the value of friendships and working in groups. Their emphases contrast strongly with the emphases in the delivery and formulation of CBET which is highly individual and instrumental. For many of the women, although useful knowledge was practical and specific they also made strong links between their self improvement and gaining useful knowledge. This useful knowledge was often revelatory and lead to new understandings and awareness; it was 'factual'. Examples of such knowledge included learning about aspects of social policy, psychology, sociology and so on and concerned issues about which the women said they had no previous understandings. The value of such revelatory knowledge depends on its context and meaning for the student; knowledge is situated and understandings are affected by one's race, class and gender positions. Therefore learning about the underlying assumptions of instrumental knowledge (for example how the structure of the National Health Service reflects the introduction of internal markets) can lead to new, more inclusive, integrated and discriminatory understandings. Similar revelatory knowledge in other vocational areas could include, for instance, transport issues in car maintenance, economic and labour market issues in business and secretarial studies, body image and fashion in hairdressing and so on.

The women in my study emphasised that they considered their college experience had led them to greater understanding and openness to new ideas and they thought that they were now more likely to think about issues rather than making assumptions. For example, many of the students commented that they had learnt to work with others from different cultures; these comments were made both by Asian and white students. The initial course work undertaken by these students was specifically intended to encourage them to examine some issues of race and culture. This work seems to have had very positive effects for many of the students and to have caused them to begin examining their assumptions; in Freirean terms this work caused them to begin developing understandings of the worlds of culture and nature — understandings about what is fixed and what is changeable. For students at such 'teachable moments' such work causes them to examine their assumptions about their own culture and social position — for white working class students this may include the realisation that they actually have a culture, as one student said:

> I have culture. I didn't know that before. *KA6-6*[1].

These realisations in turn can lead to further, more integrated and inclusive understandings about the social world.

Class-based understandings of knowledge mean that academic, but not vocational, education is often perceived as irrelevant, both for and by working class people. Vocational education is often more acceptable to working class people as it can provide access to work which, although still low paid, may be more remunerative than that otherwise available. Vocational education does relate directly to the lives of its participants and this is its potential strength as well as its weakness. This is because it can, or could, offer the opportunity to begin examining the assumptions at the basis of the particular training being undertaken and thereby to begin examining the hegemonic ideology that structures its participants lives. Although vocational education most usually reinforces social and educational boundaries it can provide really useful knowledge together with useful training.

There is a danger in my argument of reinforcing the idea that vocational education is particularly appropriate for working class people which is not my intention. There are some similarities here with the debates about whether there should be separate provision for women and black people or whether this reinforces their existing marginality — these arguments are spurious because they present a false dichotomy as the different types of provision are not exclusive. I am not arguing that vocational education is preferable to other types of education or for separate provision but am taking a pragmatic approach to the effects of the structure of the education system — its boundaries and borders and their maintenance. These effects, together with class, race and gender based understandings of knowledge, mean that, in the UK, working class adults receiving education are most likely to be receiving vocational education. If one is concerned with emancipatory education, with really useful knowledge, and the access of working class people to this, then it is necessary to examine how it is possible to provide this in vocational education and this was the purpose of my research study.

I am arguing that it is possible for vocational education to develop transformative learning because students can reach an understanding of social structures and ideologies through examining the communicative learning that underlies the relevant instrumental learning in their vocational area. If vocational education were delivered through critical pedagogy it would produce more effective practitioners and become a tool for social change rather than social control, thereby radically altering both the current and the historical boundaries of vocational education.

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Is there a boundary between formal and non-formal education? The impact of formal and non-formal education on community learning

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The post-compulsory education and training agenda in Australia is focused on vocational outcomes, which it is believed will deliver economic benefits to individuals, enterprises and the nation. Government recognition of the role which post-compulsory education and training can play in promoting economic well-being has been accompanied by a rush to more formalised institutional structures.

Formalisation of on-the-job training, and development of formal qualifications in non-traditional industries is a feature of the new Australian Qualifications Framework. There are new vocational credentials for those already in the workforce, as well as entry level awards. The Framework builds a boundary between non-accredited or 'formal' education and other education which remains 'nonformal'.

It seems that the idea of a learning society underlies the push to formalise post-compulsory vocational education. Young (1995) quotes a definition of a learning society from Hutchins (1970), which defines a learning society as one which:

> ... in addition to offering part time adult education to every man and woman at every stage of their life, has transformed its values in such a way that learning, fulfilment, becoming human ... becomes its aim and all its institutions are directed to that end. (Hutchins 1970, quoted in Young 1995, 145)

Young argues for a model of a learning society which focuses on developing and maintaining learning relationships. Young prefers this 'educative model' to models which focus on participation in institutions, gaining qualifications or the individual as a learner.

It would appear that formalisation of the vocational training system is not a necessary condition for a learning society. The Australian vocational education system most closely resembles Young's less-preferred 'credentialist model', while the system's emphasis on qualifications for individual workers corresponds to the 'access model', another less-preferred model.

Small business's continuing education preferences

How do small business managers learn? Evidence is that it is not by seeking formal credentials. Work by Schofield (1996) suggests that small business managers in Australia prefer education delivered by the adult and community education sector for their own vocational training. Many programmes offered by the adult and community education sector in Australia are not accredited, and therefore are not formal education. Evidence from a study of farmers, one group of small business managers, suggests that they also tend to choose non-formal education for their on-going vocational education needs: 76% of farm business managers attended field days, and 39% seminars, yet only 3% attended formal, accredited training in a twelve month period (Kilpatrick 1996).

Learning organisations in a learning society

In Young's educative model, the internal structures of organisations are learning-centred, so as to provide staff with 'continuing re-professionalisation'. In a learning society all institutions are learning organisations, and have a learning relationship with their environment (Morgan 1988). That is, in a learning society individuals learn within organisations, and learning also takes place between organisations.

Lundvall (1992) argues that learning organisations and networks of learning organisations create new knowledge, or innovations. Innovation is a cumulative process which builds on existing knowledge and practices through interactive learning. Organisations and networks of organisations provide environments where interactive learning takes place. Lundvall argues that everyone in organisations contributes to innovation through their learning. Learning partially emanates from routine activities; learning-by-doing, learning-by-using and learning-by-interacting, as well as emanating from learning activities such as research and development. Innovation and knowledge are 'diffused' or spread via interactive learning within and between organisations.

This view of the creation of knowledge by learning within and between organisations is consistent with Gee (1997) who argues that knowledge is both distributed and tacit. It is distributed across people, tools, and technologies. Tacit knowledge (knowledge which is not easily explained by any single team member) is built into the ways in which people (partly unconsciously) co-ordinate with others on a team and with various tools, technologies, forms of language and physical sites. Knowledge exists independently of any one individual. Individuals react with, draw on, learn from and contribute to a wider body of knowledge than the knowledge which is located 'inside' an individual. Communication with other individuals, and with inanimate written and electronic information sources (or 'texts') is a way of tapping into the wider knowledge pool, much of which has been built up over time. Communication with others can also add to the knowledge pool by recording or reporting newly created or adapted knowledge.

Success in today's global post-industrial economy relies on responsiveness to a changing environment. This requires a focus on knowledge: locating knowledge, decoding knowledge, reflecting on knowledge, using knowledge and creating new knowledge. The process of seeking, moulding and transmitting knowledge for a purpose is learning. This is consistent with Falk (1997) who suggests that a definition of learning should recognise the increasing influences of group interactions, as well as incorporating individual learning processes.

Small businesses as learning organisations

The idea of learning organisations is not restricted to large organisations; small organisations need to be learning organisations if they are to operate successfully in the dynamic global post-industrial society. How can these businesses operate responsively in a dynamic knowledge-based society and global economy? Small businesses have less people available for 'interactive learning' than larger businesses. Research by Kilpatrick (1996) shows that farm businesses with a management team of only one or two people are less likely to be responsive; they are less likely to make any changes to their management or farming practices than businesses operated by larger management teams.

Farm managers need to communicate effectively with those within and outside the business in order to locate, decode, modify, create and use knowledge; they must engage in interactive learning. They must communicate with a variety of knowledge and information sources, as well as with the more traditional suppliers of physical inputs and purchasers of physical output. Many knowledge and information sources will be organisations or groups. Some will be 'expert' organisations such as government agriculture departments, financial institutions and marketing bodies, perhaps in the form of electronic market price information services. Others will be fellow farmers. Increasingly in Australia farmers meet as groups to discuss livestock or crop production (for example, the Farm Best Practice programme in this paper), or to act on environmental issues (for example, Landcare groups).

Learning networks and 'community learning'

This paper argues that 'community learning' is the link between learning organisations and the learning society. Community learning assists in altering 'knowledge-values' because it involves a group of people in learning which stems from a shared common culture. Learning is directed towards the commonly held values of that community of learners which, like knowledge, are created and modified through interactive learning.

> Community learning can be viewed as learning which has recognised community purposes and which will achieve a reconciliation of the participants' value-sets
>
> ... It is through *learning* that communities *develop* in recognisable ways. (Falk 1997, 12)

Inter-organisational learning networks (Lundvall 1992) are one indicator of community learning.

The Centre for Research and Learning in Regional Australia's evolving model of sustainable community learning describes community learning as a cycle (learning across time) of learning involving groups (learning across and within sectors) who may have differing value sets (learning across value sets).

Work in agriculture and other sectors has pointed to the interrelationship of knowledge and values (Falk, Kilpatrick and Morgan 1997; Stevenson 1996). To illustrate, Falk, Kilpatrick and Morgan studied the implementation of quality assurance systems by beef producers. They found that most producers 'knew' that quality assurance was inevitable. Although they had participated in training for quality assurance implementation, negative perceptions of the direction in which industry leaders were steering the beef industry inhibited implementation for some of these producers.

Response to changes in the farm business environment requires not only locating, decoding, modifying, creating and using knowledge, it frequently requires modification of values associated with the knowledge. Community learning plays an important role in modifying values for small business managers by increasing their otherwise limited opportunities for interactive learning.

How can formal and non-formal education help integrate small business into the learning society?

Gee (1997), Young (1995) and Morgan (1988) all argue that a learning society requires connections or associations between individuals, organisations, sectors and institutions. How can formal and non-formal education programmes integrate organisationally and geographically isolated farm business managers into a learning society? Falk (1997) argues that learning communities are the missing link between learning organisations and a learning society. Can formal or non-formal education meet the challenge of moving to a learning society by fostering the development of new relationships between small businesses, other organisations and institutions in agriculture and other sectors? This paper answers this question by considering which features of three education programmes for farmers promote the development of sustainable community learning.

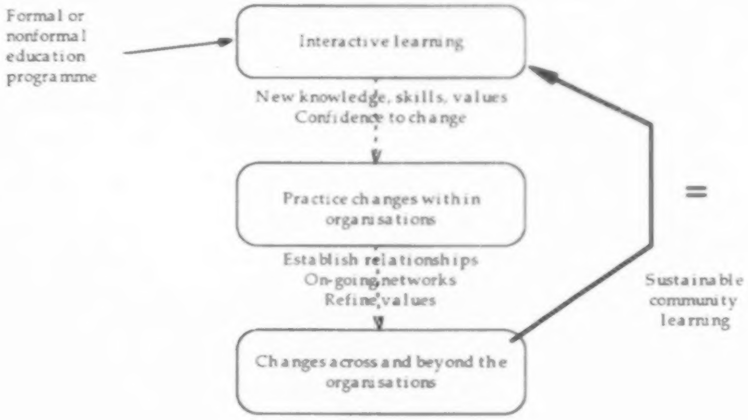
Interactive learning and outcomes for organisations, communities and society

From the literature reviewed above, interactive learning between those from different organisations or institutions is an essential part of a learning network, an essential feature of community learning and necessary for a learning society.

Formal and non-formal education programmes bring together people who work in different organisations in a situation where participants expect learning to occur. The participants share a common purpose: to acquire information and skills which can be applied in their farm businesses. Do they promote community learning?

How can we measure the programmes' success in promoting learning in these communities? We would expect there to be interactive learning from which flows changes to knowledge, skills and attitudes or values. If community learning is indeed a link to a learning society, then the changes to knowledge, skills and values would be reflected in changed behaviour or practice within and across the participating organisations. At least some of these changes should have outcomes whose impacts extend beyond the boundaries of individual organisations. This framework for considering community learning is set out in the figure below.

Framework for considering sustainable community learning


Formal or nonformal education programme
Interactive learning
New knowledge, skills, values
Confidence to change
Practice changes within organisations
Establish relationships
On-going networks
Refine values
Changes across and beyond the organisations
=
Sustainable community learning

The three programmes

The first programme is an accredited, formal education programme provided by a Technical and Further Education (TAFE) Institute. Its graduates receive a Certificate level 4, measured on the Australian Qualification Framework. This course, the Dairy Farm Management Certificate (DFMC), is targeted at dairy farmers. The offering of the Certificate considered here was a special offering for women dairy farmers. The second programme is Whole Farm Planning (WFP), a 40 hour course for farm managers, run by a government department of primary industry (agriculture). It has many of the features of accredited, formal education, including defined learning outcomes, a relatively fixed curriculum and delivery hours and regular sessions. The third programme, Farm Best Practice (FBP), is provided by the same government department. It is an on-going discussion group for potato growers, with irregular session times and no fixed attendance requirements. Discussion group programmes like Farm Best Practice are becoming common in agriculture.

The three programmes cross the boundary between formal and non-formal education for adults.

Methodology

The study explored participants' reported changes to knowledge, skills, values and actual and planned farm management behaviour six months to three years after participating in one of the programmes.

The data are from semi-structured face-to-face interviews of individuals and focus groups of between 12 and 40 farmer participants in each of the programmes. Facilitators and other stakeholders, such as industry organisations and government department representatives, were also interviewed.

The qualitative data were analysed using the NUD*IST data analysis software package.

Programme aspects which facilitate community learning

Interactive learning

Participants in all programmes noted that they had learnt from each other as well as from the facilitators. Two thirds of the participants in the Farm Best Practice programme stated that the interaction between members of the group was the best or one of the best aspects of the programme, and that this interaction contributed to their learning experience:

> Probably [the most useful thing about the programme was] learning from others, the interaction between the growers which I felt was excellent ... there were growers who I thought were very efficient growers; seeing ideas that they were running off with, things that I hadn't thought of before, and vice versa. (FBP

> participant)
>
> Somebody would say something and we'd have big debate on it. It was good because we learnt as much from each other as we learnt from [the facilitators]. (DFMC participant)

The facilitators also commented favourably on level and nature of participant interaction:

> It was very interesting to see the group dynamics change with time ... they enjoyed coming along and talking to one another, there was a lot of information exchanged both before and after the meeting. (FBP facilitator)

It is worth noting that many of the farmers expected to learn from fellow participants. Over half the Whole Farm Planning participants gave the opportunity to interact with others in the programme as a reason for joining:

> It was a useful opportunity to talk with others, to work with them, with what they were doing, and see what was happening. (WFP participant)

The co-ordinator of the Dairy Farm Management course made a point of encouraging interaction by establishing a culture in which interactive learning could flourish. The women-only group assisted in establishing this culture:

> Because of the supportive environment that we build, they were able to be very open with each other, and it is not a critical, threatening situation ... what actually happened, and frequently happens with women's groups, is that once that initial nervousness is got out of the way, there is an openness and an honesty. The benefit is that they shared those experiences and the rationale for their thoughts. (DFMC course provider)

Sharing a common culture assisted interactive learning. Many of the women enjoyed the women only composition of the group. They felt comfortable asking questions that may have displayed ignorance:

> If it had been a mixed group, the men would just dominate it against us. ... we didn't mind being ignorant with each other after a little while. It took a little time for us to say 'I don't understand, what's that mean? I don't do that'. (DFMC participant)

Changing values through interactive learning

Participant interaction during training programmes assists learning by allowing participants to test their values relating to the new knowledge and skills presented during the programme. Participant interaction fosters a change of attitudes toward new behaviours and practices and so increases the effectiveness of the training in changing behaviour and practices. The three programmes facilitated changes to values and attitudes. The Whole Farm Planning course was particularly effective in bringing about attitude change, as this quote illustrates:

> Well, I just thought to ask 'why' rather than 'why not' all the time. You don't put up the barrier in your mind. (WFP participant)

Interaction between participants and with 'expert' facilitators emerged as the most important factor in altering values:

> ... options, things that you hear other people discuss. It might not be the way we are doing it but I take it home ... And sometimes there is a good idea there and we have been able to say, 'maybe we'll try that next year'. (DFMC participant)

An important aspect of knowledge, skills and values is the confidence to implement change. The farm manager must feel confident not only that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to go ahead, but also that the potential change is consistent with the values of the community. The programmes were an effective way of allowing confirmation of community values, facilitating the implementation of change:

> There were some portions of [the Whole Farm Planning course] that confirmed the way I have been thinking, and that other people think the same way. I suppose that gives you confidence that others either agree with you or understand your point of view. (WFP participant)
>
> And so you can learn that you can stand by your own assessments. I put in turnips, I was the first person put in turnips. There must be seven crops in up my area now. (DFMC participant)

For some, their programme was the start of an on-going interactive learning process:

> Doing the course was the beginning of the awakening ... Setting up here and the further education we have done using a consultant, that has probably been the next step on from the Whole Farm Plan course. (WFP participant)

The programmes met the interactive learning criteria for community learning by allowing or encouraging interaction. Establishing shared learning values in the Dairy Management Certificate promoted interactive learning.

Changes to practice

The three programmes influenced a considerable proportion of participants to make changes on their farms. All but one of Whole Farm Planning participants had changed some aspect of their farming practice following the course. Over half of the Farm Best Practice participants had made a change influenced by the programme, and most of the Dairy Management women had made or planned changes. The changes made led to observable improvements in environmental or economic sustainability, productivity or workload:

> The drainage we did was beneficial ... We can run more animals on top of the ground and things that live in the ground, they are going to be healthy too. (WFP participant)

> I have learnt more on pasture management ... I used to run out a lot before ... I really got a lot out of the pasture production. (DFMC participant)

> Improved product quality has been a key factor in terms of consistent improvements; increased profit and production ... that's sharing ideas, access to advice ... (FBP participant)

In summary, the programmes met the community learning criteria of interactive learning, as evidenced by practice changes within organisations.

Expert contacts and on-going networks

Networks and contacts were regarded by many as the most important things gained from their programme. Participant-participant and participant-expert interaction during training built information and support networks which functioned long after the programme ceased. The Whole Farm Planning course was particularly successful in establishing on-going support networks amongst its participants; networks which were still functioning up to three years after the group had completed their course.

> You made friends that you still have through the network. Definitely our networks are still retained, some of those throughout the course and [the course] certainly generated others. (WFP participant)

> That is one thing that I learnt, if you don't have the knowledge, where do you go and find it. ... Who the best contacts are ... you go out and find out who made the mistakes first and learn by them rather than your own. (WFP participant)

Learning networks which extend beyond organisational boundaries, such as those referred to here, are an essential feature of community learning.

Impact of community learning across and beyond organisations

A representative of the TAFE provider explained how the benefits of the Dairy Farm Management course extended into the wider farming community through discussion with farming partners and further interaction in the broader dairying community:

> The women are now seeing themselves more as professional partners. ... they would go and discuss things with their partners, and sometimes there is a bit of resistance and others were really keen. But always, always there was some change. Or they would look at things and reject it, say 'No, that's not the way it should be done'. It flowed on to the whole farming community as well. (DFMC course provider*)*

As well as benefits on individual properties, there were benefits to community environments that flowed directly from the Whole Farm Planning course:

> In the short term I have become more aware of landcare and quite involved with our Landcare group. And we've applied for Landcare funds and fenced off remnant bush and done things that we may not have done quite so quickly had I not gone to the course. (WFP participant)

These formal and non-formal education programmes had impacts that extended across and beyond the learning organisations which took part. The programmes have generated potential future community learning, for example, in the dairy community and among members of the Landcare group. These other communities and groups may have cultures and values which do not completely match those of the 'programme community'; future community learning may take place across value sets.

Conclusion

The three programmes considered here show that both formal and non-formal education programmes for adults can be successful in promoting community learning. The aspects of the programmes which contribute to changes in knowledge, values and, subsequently to practice, are similar across the three delivery modes. Promotion of interactive learning by encouraging interaction with other participants and facilitators is the key to ensuring that community learning occurs. Adults recognise the benefits of community learning: the opportunity to learn from other farmers was one of the main reasons given for participating in the programmes.

Programmes which encourage and facilitate interaction between participants and with 'expert' facilitators are particularly effective in bringing about value change and developing confidence to implement changes to practice. Participants formed sustainable learning and support networks which continued to function after the educational programmes concluded. These networks allow on-going interactive learning across organisation boundaries. The networks serve to reinforce knowledge and values learned during the programme, and to support farmers in making changes to their farm management practices. The sustainable community learning facilitated by the programmes promotes a cycle of future community learning (learning across time) with other groups (learning across sectors) who may have other value sets (learning across value sets).

The demonstrated importance of interaction in a learning environment has implications for the design and delivery of education programmes for farmers and others in the workforce.

Acknowledgment

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Identifying groups of learners through the use of learning strategies

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Since the classic work of Houle (1961), two distinct strands of research have emerged in the field of adult education. The orientation, focus, philosophical basic, and methodology of these two strands has been different. One strand has focused on the programme planning element of adult education. Its concern has been with formal programmes and those who participate in them. Research findings from these studies have direct applicability by administrators interested in establishing a flourishing adult continuing education programme. Houle's learning orientations have served as the conceptual basis for this line of inquiry and much of the inquiry has centred around the work of Boshier (1971) and his Education Participation Scale. While much of the research has focused on those who participate in the formal programmes, some has also investigated the non-participants (Scanlan and Darkenwald 1984). Regardless of the exact audience being investigated, this line of inquiry tends to ask research questions from a psychological perspective and relies on quantitative methods to measure the degree of participation.

The other strand focuses on the individual learner. Rather than being preoccupied with the learner's participation in formal educational programmes, researchers in this camp have been intrigued with the concept of self-directed learning and with how adults learn in a variety of informal, real-life situations. Drawing heavily on sociological concepts, this group is grounded in phenomenology and pays special attention to the context in which the learning is taking place. The research methodology of choice for this group is qualitative in nature and individual development and empowerment are the outcome goals for learners in this approach. This group prefers to use the verb 'learning' rather than the noun 'education'.

Members of these two strands ask fundamentally different questions in the field of adult education, and the field is stronger because of this diversity. The groups differ in almost every aspect, one difference being that the participation-focused group has had a clear conceptual model upon which to base their inquiry. This has been Houle's learning orientations with the three orientations toward either goal, activity, or learning purposes. The learning-focused group has not had such a typology around which to organise its research. However, that may now be changing. Collectively, recent research in the area of learning strategies has yielded evidence of five distinct groups of learners that exist in most learning situations and that cut across most demographic variables. Thus, these findings have the potential of providing a typology for learning similar to the typology which Houle's learning orientations provided to participation researchers.

Regardless of the type of setting, learners use various strategies to accomplish their learning needs. Learning strategies are

> the techniques and skills that an individual elects to use in order to accomplish a specific learning task ... Such strategies vary by individual and by learning objective (Fellenz and Conti, 1989, 7-8).

Since the recent development of the Self-Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS), researchers such as Hays (1995), Hill (1992), McKenna (1991), Moretti (1995), Strakal (1995), Yabui (1992), and Conti and Kolody (1995) have found that various groups of learners can be distinguished by the learning strategies which they use.

The purpose of this study was to expand the investigation of this growing area of study by examining and describing the learning strategies by adult learners at two-year colleges in Alberta, Canada. Most of the previous studies had in this area utilised populations that had a specific focus. This study solicited a broad population from several diverse public community colleges in order to gather a disparate data set in order to describe the learning strategies used by a large group of adults in order to determine if patterns existed in how they learn. Building upon a learning strategies study initiated at Medicine Hat College (Conti and Kolody 1995), five Canadian two-year community colleges agreed to co-operatively conduct this study with the technical assistance of the adult education staff from a US university. In addition to Medicine Hat College, these schools included Grande Prairie College, Keyano College, Mt. Royal College, and Red Deer College.

Methodology

This research project consisted of two parts. The first part was causal-comparative in nature to investigate the relationship of learning strategies to a variety of educational and demographic variables. This stage of the research was approached deductively. Groupings which were hypothesised as potentially having an influence upon how people used learning strategies were imposed upon the data. The multivariate technique of discriminant analysis was used to determine if the groups could be discriminated from each other based upon the interactive effects of the various learning strategies.

The second part was descriptive and was approached inductively. Cluster analysis was used to identify the groups which inherently existed in the data (Conti 1996). To help name and describe these clusters, analysis of variance and discriminant analysis were conducted. Since five distinct groups of learners were identified by this quantitative process, individual and group interviews were conducted to collect supplementary qualitative data to further assist in describing the clusters. These interviews elicited responses from the participants that described their learning patterns and preferences and that related their learning to actions of teachers. Individual and group interviews were held with each cluster of learners; 28 group and 23 individual interviews were conducted.

Learning strategies were measured with the Self-Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS). This valid and reliable instrument consists of real life learning scenarios with responses drawn from the areas of metacognition, metamotivation, memory, critical thinking, and resource management (Conti and Fellenz 1991). Each of the five areas consists of three specific learning strategies: Metacognition — Planning, Monitoring, and Adjusting; Meta-motivation Attention, Reward/Enjoyment, and Confidence; Memory Organisation, External Aids, and Memory Application; Critical Thinking-Testing Assumptions, Generating Alternatives, and Conditional Acceptance; and Resource Management-Identification of Resources, Critical Use of Resources, and Use of Human Resources. SKILLS has two forms of six scenarios; both forms were used in this study. From these, respondents pick four scenarios that are most meaningful to them.

Data were collected by administering SKILLS to a representative sample of students at each of the five participating colleges in Alberta. At each college a local research assistant from the faculty identified a sample which was representative of that college, and each college was randomly assigned one form of SKILLS. Additionally, demographic and educational information was gathered to further analyse the relationship between these factors and learning strategies. The sample included 1,143 learners who ranged in age from 17 to 71; 70.5% were female, and 29.5% were male.

Findings

The overall profile for the students throughout the province revealed a divergent group of learners; no single learning strategy area or specific learning strategy was predominant. The possible range of scores for the learning strategies areas is 12 to 36. All the group means were near the middle of this range: Metacognition 23.2; Metamotivation 22.9; Memory 24.1; Critical Thinking 23.9; and Resource Management 25.5. Likewise, the individual learning strategies, which have a range of 4 to 12, had little divergence with means that varied from 7.04 to 8.84.

Discriminant analysis was used to analyse the relationship between learning strategies and various demographic and educational variables. Discriminant analysis is a multivariate procedure which is used to discriminate between different groups of people by placing them into groups and investigating if they can be distinguished by a set of discriminating variables (Conti 1993; Klecka 1980). Unlike Hill (1992) who found a meaningful discriminant function which distinguished the group of learners at Montana's tribal colleges with the lowest grade point average from the group with the highest grade point average, learning strategies as measured by SKILLS were not useful in discriminating similar groups of learners in the Canadian two-year colleges. Likewise, only weak differences were found when the learners were grouped in the areas of gender, programme, and age. Consistently, each of these analyses explained only about 10% of the variance that could be explained beyond mere chance.

However, cluster analysis was more successful in explaining the data. Cluster analysis is a multivariate statistical procedure that seeks to identify homogeneous groups or clusters in the data (Aldenderfer and Blashfield 1984, Chapter 1). Its strength lies in its ability to examine the person in a holistic manner (Conti 1996). Cluster analysis produced a solution with five clear and distinct clusters of learners. Based upon quantitative analysis using analysis of variance for each of the learning strategies and the other demographic variables when the learners were divided into their clusters and based upon the interviews, these fairly equal sized clusters were named Navigators (259), Monitors (266), Critical Thinkers (223), Engagers (236), and Networkers (199).

Each of the five distinct groups of learners have explicit preferences for learning strategies and learning is enhanced when teaching strategies and learning environments are congruent with the prominent learning strategy specific to that group. As learners in this study reflected upon the specific preferences for their group, they offered insightful recommendations for teachers.

The Navigator cluster contains the highest number of university transfer students along with the students with the highest grade point average. It is composed of learners who rely heavily on the metacognition strategy of Planning. Thus, these focused learners chart a course for learning and follow it. This group is also higher than other groups in its preference for the Resource Management learning strategy of Identification of Resources; thus, its members know how to locate and use the best information. They also frequently use the Memory strategy of Organisation to structure or process information so that the material can be better stored and retrieved. As structure and organisation is crucial to the success of these learners, teachers can enhance learning by communicating expected learning outcomes and by providing outlines, schedules, and deadlines.

Monitors are the learners who most often use the Meta-cognition strategy of Monitoring as they review plans, check to see if they are on task, and compare their progress to accepted standards or models. This group contains older students who rely heavily on the Resource Management strategy of Critical Use of Resources to help in the learning process; this process includes using appropriate rather than available resources and contacting experts or other secondary sources. These learners also use the Meta-motivation strategy of Attention such as avoiding distractions and setting time aside for learning to stay focused on the material. Specific to this group, these learners are most successful and are able to best monitor their learning progress when visual models and standards are provided as a basis for comparison.

Critical Thinkers are those students who make heavy use of the Metacognition strategy of Adjusting their learning process as well as the Memory strategy of Memory Application, which involves using mental images or other memories to facilitate problem solving. This group also relies heavily on all the strategies in the area of Critical Thinking. They Test Assumptions to evaluate the specifics and generalisability within a learning situation; they Generate Alternatives to create additional learning options; and they are open to Conditional Acceptance of learning outcomes while keeping an open mind to other learning possibilities. Provision for individuality and creativity in completing assignments and projects is the key for successful learning for Critical Thinkers. As these learners instinctively generate alternatives, learning is enhanced with opportunities for hands-on learning and experimentation. Because learners in this group place little importance on memorisation, they are best evaluated with open-ended questions and problem-solving activities.

The Engagers are the passionate learners who love to learn and learn with feeling. This groups relies heavily on the Metamotivation strategies of Reward/Enjoyment to anticipate the value to one's self for learning or having fun with the learning activity and of Confidence to reassure their belief that they can complete the learning task successfully. This group also uses the Memory strategy of using External Aids such as lists to reinforce memory. Since this group learns best when they are actively engaged in a meaningful manner with the subject matter, the environment, and the teacher, educators should provide Engagers with opportunities that encourage learning projects based on individual student interests. Teamwork and group projects that focus on process as well as product can also reinforce the learning strategy of reward/enjoyment required by these learners.

The Networkers frequently use the Resource Management strategy of Using Human Resources, which includes dialogues, discussions, and networking to integrate others into the social and political processes of learning. They also make heavy use of the Memory strategy of Memory Application such as using mental images or other memories to facilitate problem solving. Interaction is the key to learning for this group, so educators should provide an environment that allows for brainstorming, teamwork, and discussion of opposing or different viewpoints. As these learners make heavy use of human resources, teachers can enhance their learning by including guest speakers and media to present expertise in various subject areas.

Discriminant analysis was used to identify the process that distinguishes the five clusters of learners from each other and to generate a formula for placing individuals in the groups (Conti 1996). The discriminant function produced by this analysis was 95.5% accurate in placing the 1,143 learners in their correct clusters; this is a 75.5% increase over their chance placement of 20%. Two of the four discriminant functions produced by the analysis each accounted for over 50% of the variance that existed in the data. The first function accounted for 62.03% of the variance, and the second one accounted for 56.08% of the variance. The process that discriminated the groups from each other in the first function was an internal versus external view of the learning process by the learner. In this function, the Metamotivational strategies of Confidence in learning and Reward/Enjoyment with learning were contrasted with the Resource Management strategy of Identification of the best learning sources. While some learners emphasised their own motivational factors for learning, others gained their security in learning by having the proper learning resources. This first function was named Locus of Control for Learning. The second function, which described another process that discriminated the groups from each other, paired Attention by focusing on the learning materials and Planning the best way to learn against the strategies of Memory Application by using techniques such as mental images and

Conditional Acceptance of learning outcomes. Thus, this function distinguishes between those with a preoccupation with what needs to be learned and how this is going to be accomplished and those who have mental flexibility with the learning process. The second function was named Structure for Learning.

Conclusions

This study adds to the growing literature base on learning strategies and contributes to a deeper understanding of patterns and divergence in adult learners. Clearly, distinct groups do exist of learners who have particular preferences for different patterns of learning strategies for attacking learning problems. Numerous discriminant analyses were conducted to explore hypothesised differences in known groups of learners. Although some differences were found among the learners, no strong patterns were found. The inability to find differences using discriminant analysis suggests that imposing sense upon the data through preconceived groupings is not the best way to uncover differences in uses of learning strategies by disparate groups of learners. Instead, multivariant techniques such as cluster analysis which allow the data to expose its own patterns are more productive.

The findings from this study are supported by other learning style research being conducted at the Center for Adult Learning Research at Montana State University. Data from 422 financial planners in the United States were combined with the data set from this study and the clusters were recalculated; although 37% more variance was introduced, the clusters from this study were reproduced (Conti, Kolody and Schneider 1997). Likewise, other studies with more specific populations have produced results similar to this study. Using nursing students in Montana, Lockwood (1997) found four groups of learners. Using Air Force personnel at the Pentagon, Korinek (1997) also found four groups. Using tribal people from the community and from a community college on the Fort Peck Reservation, Bighorn (1997) also likewise found four groups. All of the groups are remarkably similar to the five found in this study. Since the populations for these studies is more concentrated than the province-wide community college population of this study, the four groups from these other studies appear to be subsets of five from this study.

The five distinct clusters that emerged in this Alberta study may be a new typology with major implications for teaching, diagnosing, and counselling of adult learners. In fact, the findings from this study suggest that a general typology of learners exists which cuts across the demographic variables which researchers typically use to classify learners.

As these Canadian colleges have co-operated to follow Schön's suggestion of being reflective practitioners who can create their own knowledge base, they may have uncovered a general model related to the strategies used by adult learners. Besides jointly conducted training sessions for the college faculties, the findings from this study have encouraged the faculty and students associated with the Center for Adult Learning Research and the adult education graduate programme at Montana State University to expand their research efforts related to learning strategies and to duplicate the overall design of this study with various populations of adult learners. When a broad enough sample can be collected which will be representative of that diverse and elusive target population referred to as the adult learner, a similar cluster analysis will be conducted. Such an analysis will disclose if this five-cluster solution is a general model for adult learners or if it is more contextually specific to Canadian learners in Alberta. In the meantime, this study has demonstrated that as in previous studies, SKILLS appears to be an effective instrument for identifying adult learning strategies and that the concept of learning strategies is a productive tool in the pursuit of a better understanding of adult learning.

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The TUEA experiment: trade union education in New Zealand 1986-1992

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In August 1986, New Zealand enacted legislation that launched a major and quite unique experiment in trade union education. The *Union Representatives Education Leave Act (UREL)* was significant on two counts. First, it established a union anchored, government funded, statutory body: The Trade Union Education Authority (TUEA); second, the UREL Act provided unions with a modest but universal statutory right to paid educational leave (PEL) for 'union representatives', irrespective of the size of the enterprise. A change of government in late 1990 saw the enactment of a radically different, neo-liberal industrial relation framework and a major review of TUEA. In November, 1992, the UREL was repealed. This move abolished TUEA and extinguished the PEL entitlement.

This paper has three interrelated purposes. First, it seeks background developments in union-labour education in New Zealand from 1986-1992. Second, it aims to acquaint a wider audience with an experiment that was grounded philosophically in a semi-radical interpretation of UNESCO's democratic concept of lifelong education. Third, it attempts to offer a preliminary evaluation of TUEA's accomplishments.

In view of the word restriction applied to conference papers, references are limited. In addition to the sources cited, this paper draws on: the papers of the two government inquiries that led to the enactment of the UREL, both of which I chaired; (2) the comprehensive records of a member of TUEA's Board, 1986-1992; (3) my own extensive collection of TUEA materials, unpublished background and discussion papers, other reports, relevant press clipping, and articles; and (4) interviews with present and former trade unionists and union educators.

Theoretical and historical context

Four interconnected considerations shaped the development of workers' education in New Zealand up until the 1960s: (1) the peculiarities of the country's industrial relations system; (2) the achievements of reformist politics; (3) the vigour with which the state defeated militant unionism; and (4) endeavours to establish and sustain independent or union-linked workers' education. Each of these is dealt with very briefly below.

(1) From 1894 until relatively recently, the cornerstone of the industrial relations system was compulsory conciliation and arbitration supplemented by other protective legislation. Union coverage was extensive with membership in the private sector compulsory for most wage workers. However, because the scope of union activity was restricted to industrial matters and membership fees were kept low, most unions focused narrowly on wages and conditions and encouraged their members to look to electoral politics, specifically the election of labour governments, to advance their wider interests.

(2) and (3) At the end of 1890, both moderates and socialists in the labour movement supported the election of a Liberal government. Earlier that year, the emerging union movement had suffered a major defeat in an Australasian maritime strike. That defeat convinced moderates of the need for a more sympathetic environment and prompted many socialists to embrace state socialism. The Liberals introduced a number of social reforms (Sutch 1969), but the limitations of the arbitration system induced a wave of militancy in the early 1900s. A newly elected conservative government crushed the militants in 1913. This led to a realignment on the left with arbitrationists and socialists uniting to form the Labour Party. Labour was eventually elected to office in 1935. Its reforms were extensive; but its failure to change the economic system led to dissent. In the late 1940s, militants again challenged the arbitration system. Severely wounded by Labour before its electoral defeat in 1949, they were crushed by a National (conservative) government in 1951 following a five month waterfront lockout.

(4) A number of small, socialist sponsored educational bodies came and went in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The establishment of the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) in 1914 promised something more. It enjoyed a measure of assistance from within the labour movement, but was essentially reliant on university support. This resulted in a confused sense of purpose and divisions within its ranks between liberals and radicals. Nevertheless, the WEA certainly contributed to the shaping of Labour's constituency in the interwar years (Shuker 1984). Personal discussions with a number of union activists have also confirmed that they acquired basic meeting and leadership skills at WEA classes in the 1930s. There is also a lot of scattered evidence and anecdotal accounts of left educational activity occurring on the fringes of the labour movement prior to and after World War II and of educational and cultural activities within some of the militant unions, especially the watersiders. It is difficult to piece all of this together, but it would be reasonable to claim that in

New Zealand, as in Britain, there has been something similar to Edward Thompson's (1978, 276) 'substantial minority tradition, influencing major trade unions, that belongs to the articulate Left.'

Regrouping and reorganisation

The labour movement did not seriously challenge the welfare state settlement again until the late 1960s. But it did reorganise internally as a number of unions adopted more democratic structures: direct election of officials, functioning job delegate (shop steward) systems, and stopwork meetings. This reorganisation was initiated within the left unions, but was more widespread by the late 1960s. Over the next decade, this greater emphasis on membership involvement saw a number of younger unionists with experience in the major social movements of the period begin to participate in unions. Meanwhile, a series of economic crises dating from the late 1960s was beginning to highlight the limitations of the Keynesian, welfare state compromise. Unions started to move away from the arbitration system and to engage instead in more direct, localised bargaining. Faced with this upsurge as well as the economic problems behind it, successive governments temporarily suspended aspects of the industrial relations system and imposed direct wage and price controls.

The old order was not working, but no one quite knew what to do. Under government auspices, central employers and union organisations attempted to develop the framework for a new system, essentially a modification of the old. However in 1983, National abruptly abolished compulsory unionism. Labour's election in 1984 saw compulsory membership restored but compulsory arbitration abolished. Labour quickly came under considerable domestic and international pressure to deregulate the labour market in line with its other free market policies. New industrial legislation in 1987 failed to satisfy its neo-liberal critics. In 1991, the new National government's Employment Contracts Act (ECA) substantially deregulated the labour market and removed unions' legislative base.

The immediate origins of the TUEA experiment

As job delegates became more common, interest grew in competency training for union officials and workplace representatives. Even employers supported this: if workplace delegates were going to be a feature of the system, then it is best that they be well trained. In 1967, the Industrial Relations Centre at Wellington's Victoria University sponsored the visit of an experienced American labour educator, Joseph Mire. That visit and his ideas resulted in a number of trades councils and unions holding short training seminars; around the same time, the WEA established a postal education service for active unionists. Support for industrial training developed in the wake of the National Development Conference in 1969. In the early 1970s, the government and the Vocational Training Council took initiatives to develop and co-ordinate courses in industrial relations. In 1974 the (Labour) government announced a system of training incentives and the formation of a Trade Union Training Board (TUTB) with a tripartite governing body representing unions, employers, and government officials.

The TUTB took some time to establish itself and to encourage unions to provide industrial relations training. It was poorly resourced and many left unions were sceptical of the politics of industrial training. However by 1980, the TUTB was approving more than 250 seminars a year attended by over 4000 officials, 95% of whom were honorary. Most seemed to have PEL; some unions had negotiated modest entitlements; others made one-off arrangements with employers; and others paid their members' lost wages. These seminar were conducted by both union based, TUTB subsidised educators and by others, such as myself, who were based in sympathetic tertiary institutions.

The advent of the TUTB provided a focus for union educators and a modest amount of money for them to meet periodically and dream of future possibilities. A number of these educators had come through the social movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, had connections with the broader adult education movement, were familiar with the traditions of workers' education in New Zealand and elsewhere, and empathised with UNESCO's vision of lifelong education. However they faced two immediate difficulties: first, the union movement lacked any developed policy on trade union education; second, limited resources and the absence of any universal PEL entitlement. With the support of the secretary of the Federation of Labour (FoL), Ken Douglas, union educators prepared a discussion paper that was endorsed by the FoL and distributed in 1981. Although it focused on job delegates, the paper looked beyond industrial relations training by linking the purposes of union education to the objectives of the FoL; these included the promotion of democratic unionism and the establishment of an equitable economic system.

The significance of the FoL paper was its advocacy of a statist solution: state funding of trade union education and a legislative entitlement to PEL. The paper was the basis for discussions with the Labour Party, in particular its education spokesperson, Russell Marshall. He worked with the union educators during 1981 to draft a Labour party policy statement that incorporated key UNESCO principles and which endorsed ILO Convention 140 on PEL. Unfortunately, Labour's failure to win the 1981 election deferred those proposals for another three years.

The TUEA blueprint

Following Labour's victory in mid-1984, Marshall, now Minister of Education, and the Minister of Labour, Stan Rodger, moved quickly to establish the inquiry that was to draft the TUEA blueprint. But there were soon signs that this was not going to be a smooth process. Even before the Task Force on Trade Union Education was formalised, Treasury, supported by the Minister of Finance, Roger Douglas, tabled a cabinet paper that threatened to torpedo the whole exercise. In the end, and only after considerable union pressure, the cabinet split the inquiry into two: a Task Force comprised primarily of union nominees to report on trade union education and a Working Party comprising two of those unionists and two employer nominees to report on paid educational leave. I chaired both inquiries. After extensive consultation with unions, employers, and adult educators, two unanimous reports were completed by July (Law 1985a; 1985b). Empowering legislation was drafted promptly, introduced in early 1986, and enacted in August of that year.

TUEA was established as a statutory body with a board of 13 members. Of these, six were appointed by the union movement and three by employers; there also was a representative of adult education, a member elected by TUEA's staff, a nominee of the Director-General of Education, and a nominee of the Secretary of Labour. The legislation set out 13 functions. Broadly speaking they were: (1) to promote, co-ordinate and provide union education; (2) to approve programmes for the purposes of paid educational leave; and (3) to serve as an advisory body to Government, educational agencies and others involved in worker education or education about workers. This last set of functions gave TUEA wide scope to involve itself in workers' education more generally.

The UREL Act defined a 'union education course' as one 'designed to assist authorised union representatives (a) to become well-informed about industrial relations; or (b) to participate in an active and well-informed manner both in the affairs of any union to which they belong and in their employment? This definition was deliberately worded to ensure that the notion of 'union representative' was not limited to established, predominantly Pakeha (European), male job delegates. One of the themes running through the Task Force's two reports was a determination, justified by Labour's social equity policy, to ensure the participation of potential delegates and women, Maori, and Pacific Island unionists.

The PEL formula was designed to ensure that every workplace, no matter how small, was covered and that the possibility for employer manipulation or intimidation was minimised. This was achieved by vesting the entitlement in unions and not individuals. A union's PEL entitlement was based on the number of members employed by an employer within a defined geographic area (an industrial district). The formula was 1-4 members, three days; 5-47 members, five days; 48-280 members, one additional day for every eight members; in excess of 280 members, 35 days plus five days for every 100 or part thereof in excess of 280. These entitlements were criticised by some unionists who thought them too meagre and condemned by employers who calculated, on the basis of an absolute maximum take-up, that they were liable for something like 270,000 PEL days a year. In fact, there was nothing magical about the numbers; they simply represented the most favourable arrangement that the employer representatives on the working party were willing to endorse.

The critical factor in all of this was Labour's firm policy commitments: (1) to ensuring 'that New Zealanders were well informed about industrial relations' and to 'informed and active participation by trade unionists in their unions and in their employment'; (2) 'to work towards ratification of ILO Convention 140: Concerning Paid Educational Leave;' and (3) to UNESCO's 1976 Recommendation, in particular Clause 10 which deals with 'civic, political, trade union and co-operative education'. Also important was a letter of clarification from the two ministers which directed that trade union education was not to be confined to 'the narrow idea of industrial relations training'.

TUEA's achievements

TUEA was subjected to two formal reviews. The first (Rivers 1989), evaluated TUEA's performance in relation to its functions as specified in the UREL. The second (Trotman and Jackson 1991), was commissioned by National's Minister of Labour and required that TUEA be reviewed 'within the context of Government's labour relations goals and public expenditure constraints'(2). Both highly commended TUEA; even the second report affirmed that it was fulfilling all of its statutory functions and was extremely cost effective. The discussion that follows takes account of both reviews, but is more concerned with TUEA's achievements in relation to UNESCO's vision of lifelong learning and the aspirations of those who conceived the experiment in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

There is widespread agreement, endorsed by both formal reviews, that as a provider, stimulator, and co-ordinator of trade union education, TUEA's accomplishments in six short years were quite remarkable. In excess of 150,000 participant days of approved education took place over that period. Like the TUTB, much of TUEA's work was instrumental: providing union representatives with basic skills. But even in this respect it broke considerable new ground by developing systematic programmes for Maori unionists, Pacific Island unionists, women unionists, and courses on working with other cultures. TUEA also took advantage of a more comprehensive, organising concept of union education, more flexible functions, and better resourcing to rekindle the critical dimension of workers' education. To some extent this was implicit in its work in special interest areas. But it also was necessitated by the union movement's need to come to terms with a rapidly changing economic and social context that was at odds with its social democratic heritage and ethos. TUEA's role in assisting unions to work effectively in the new environment assumed increasing importance as that environment became more difficult.

Once it had managed to establish its own education programme, TUEA turned its attention to other providers of education. Its strategy was to encourage, goad, push tertiary institutions to meet their educational responsibilities to working people as outlined in the Task Force's second report (Law, 1987). TUEA was directly involved in establishing the Centre for Labour and Trade Union Studies at the University of Waikato and in facilitating less ambitious developments at Auckland and Massey universities. It also encouraged a number of polytechnics to develop programmes about unions for their students. Within the limits of its resources, TUEA attempted to provide better support for union representatives on the councils of tertiary bodies and on other educational committees. Most important, as it established its credibility it became a major voice, representing union opinion, in the wider educational and training community and with policy makers. This effectively provided the union movement with a much greater level of access to policy development than it had had in the past.

TUEA promoted very actively education about the restructuring and reform of work. This reflected a changing mood within the union movement in response to the growing dominance of New Right ideology. TUEA's Deputy Director, Dick Lowe (1990), represented an emerging view within unions that held that they needed to rethink radically many of their traditional attitudes and strategies. Lowe claimed that unions and employers needed 'to foster a more co-operative approach to ensure survival in a highly competitive environment' (71). Traditionally, he noted, union concerns related to wealth distribution while those of employers related to wealth creation. Lowe suggested that issues such as job security, standard of living, participation and consultation, and career paths could link together successfully these clusters to the benefit of all. This required, he argued, an evolutionary re-framing of workers' education in line with notions of a co-operative economy. Fully aware of the new ground that TUEA and the Council of Trade Unions (CTU) were attempting to break, Lowe observed that some unionists might view this approach as 'advocating collaboration with the ruling classes. However in my view the interests of workers must be furthered by using every means at our disposal' (71).

Inevitably, TUEA also played a central role in facilitating some of the major labour market transitions that took place under Labour; this in turn generated some criticism, usually muted, from the political Left. After the change of Government at the end of 1990, TUEA was required to assist the transition to the Employment Contracts Act regime.

Five years after its demise, unionists and former unionists offer quite diverse opinions about TUEA and its achievements. There is almost unanimous agreement about its success in extending educational opportunities to sections of the workforce that had never previously experienced them. There is also agreement that it successfully established pathways into further, relevant education for many who completed TUEA courses. But there is disagreement about its relationship to the union movement. One view holds that TUEA was too close to, even dominated by, the central union leadership. This led, some argue, to too much energy being devoted to CTU campaigns and to furthering the organisational needs of the CTU rather than the educational needs of workers. From a more critical, left perspective, it is also argued that TUEA became too involved in essentially collaborationist projects, such as the promotion of a 'compact' between the Labour government and the union movement and the workplace reform project. Unionists closer to the CTU hold almost the opposite view. They indicate some frustration with what they perceive to have been TUEA's reluctance to act promptly in support of union priorities. Some holding this view believe that one of TUEA's weaknesses was that it saw itself as part of the education sector rather than as part of the union movement.

Conclusions

Much of TUEA's work focused on cultural, economic and social change, public sector restructuring, union reorganisation and amalgamation, changes to industrial relations, and wider issues concerning the education of working people and their children. This helped shift unions' attitudes to education. TUEA demonstrated how an active education policy could enhance the quality of participation in union affairs and could serve as an effective means of involving those who previously had been marginalised. It also stimulated a resurgence in publications designed to meet the intellectual and practical needs of working people.

It was always unlikely that TUEA would survive the defeat of the Labour government. In retrospect, I remain surprised that it was ever established at all, given Labour's commitment to economic and social restructuring and given the opposition to the experiment from Treasury, from employers, and even from senior members of the government. At some point, the logic of Labour's policies would have demanded further deregulation of the labour market. Even had such moves not resulted in TUEA's abolition, they would have undermined the basis of the PEL entitlement.

In conclusion, the TUEA experiment highlights the strengths and limitations of a statist approach. It can resolve, at least temporarily, problems like PEL and resources, but unless a strong culture of workers' education is built beyond the statist framework, including within unions themselves, the momentum will be lost. Looking ahead, there is no prospect of a future Labour government repeating the TUEA experiment. What might be possible, however, is direct funding of non-statutory bodies; unions could provide trade union education and dedicated agencies more comprehensive workers' education. Perhaps, after all, there is still a role for a WEA!

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Understanding adult student learning using theories of academic literacy

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I have been working on a longitudinal research project examining the study experiences of adult distance learners as they progress from foundation level to first and second level courses at the Open University in the UK. At a broader level, this research has been concerned with the interaction of study with adult lives, but at a specific level I have been examining the ways in which students construct academic knowledge as they progress through their studies. In this paper I will suggest that attention to the concept of academic literacy can complement other approaches to adult learning which are concerned with the cultural and social contexts of study. The research on which my paper is based is specifically about the experiences of adult *distance* learners but I believe that it also raises questions about the ways in which adults construct knowledge in all sectors of today's higher education. Additionally, it raises concerns which affect all students in higher education and not just adult students. The paper suggests an academic literacy framework in which to consider issues of student learning in today's higher education, in opposition to a transferable skills based, or competencies based model.

It is now widely understood in theories of student learning that knowledge is constructed through the learners experience of learning. A major area of such research developed within the 'phenomenographic' tradition, by Marton *et al.* (1984) is concerned with understanding learning from the learner's perspective. Morgan (1993) examines learning from the adult learner's position and considers the cultural and contextual nature of student learning. Lave and Wenger (1991) challenge the transmission and assimilation model of learning in which individual learners are seen to internalise knowledge. Drawing on examples of adult learning, they suggest that learning is about what they call 'legitimate peripheral participation' in communities of practice. Successful learning takes place when students are able to grasp the practices that they need to master to become full, rather than peripheral, members of the community. They outline the relationship between identities, knowing and social membership and highlight the importance of discourse and talk in communities of practice. Saljo (1996) also considers discursive practices in relation to broader learning contexts and the concept of 'understanding'; he emphasises the relevance of shared social practices.

This paper takes a complementary approach to these other contextual approaches to student learning and is concerned with the conflicts and contradictions that are experienced by students as they negotiate academic knowledge in relation to the more familiar worlds of work, community and home which they know and understand so well. Whilst acknowledging, in common with other authors who are concerned with adult student learning, that knowledge is not transmitted but constructed through students' interactions with specific learning contexts, the theoretical frames used in this paper are based upon the 'New Literacy Studies'. I want to suggest that a central part of the learning process for students is concerned with the struggle between other familiar 'ways of knowing' and 'academic ways of knowing', and the different literacy practices that are associated with these. This is more than just a conflict between everyday and academic discourses (Laurillard 1993), or about becoming acculturated into academic 'ways of knowing'. The research illustrates how adult learning — through students engaging with new and unfamiliar literacy practices — is often concerned with contesting and challenging these supposedly 'academic ways of knowing' and interweaving prior knowledge and ways of writing and reading texts with course requirements. What is important in terms of understanding adult learning is understanding the relationship between the textual representation of academic genres in writing and reading, and students own personal construction of knowledge in a specific context. Language is not merely the transparent medium through which students learn about academic ways of thinking, which an 'acculturation into academic discourse' model would have us believe. Language and associated literacy practices actually construct and constitute knowledge in specific ways which frequently conflict with adult students' other experiences of constructing their own world knowledge. What is learnt for one course, or for a specific tutor or course is a particular way of viewing the world which students negotiate through their writing.

Literacy studies and approaches to learning

Developments in the 'New Literacy Studies' (Street 1984, Barton 1994), in school and workplace settings, have moved away from models which focus on the educational and cognitive aspects of writing and reading, and are concerned with the cultural and social characteristics of literacy. Literacy is therefore concerned with the social practices which surround the use of the written word. Street (1984) contrasts an 'autonomous' model of literacy, with an 'ideological' model. He suggests that an 'autonomous' model makes universal claims for literacy which are related to beliefs in fundamental cognitive differences between literate and non-literate groups in society, and further that this position relates becoming literate to the development of logical thought and abstraction. In contrast, he proposes an 'ideological' model which moves away from a cognitive understanding of literacy and focuses on the social relationships that surround particular literacy practices and the institutions in which these are taking place. In this sense literacy is understood within both the contexts and the ideologies in which a set of particular literacy practices are embedded. It is necessary to consider the social contexts within which any literacy event is occurring, and to realise the meanings that are produced for individuals who are engaged in any process of reading and writing.

This approach which conceptualises literacy as a social practice has more recently been applied to higher education settings (Lea and Street, 1997). Learning at university involves adapting to new ways of knowing: new ways of understanding, interpreting and organising knowledge. Practices of academic literacy are central processes through which students learn new subjects and develop their knowledge about new areas of study. Meanings are not simply given by the texts that students encounter during their studies but are created through a particular set of literacy practices. Bazerman (1985) outlines how written academic texts themselves serve to construct particular subject knowledge in individual and specific ways. He makes the crucial point that writing matters because the different choices of what we write result in different meanings, and therefore the very act of writing constructs our academic knowledge in contrasting ways. Bazerman's analysis can be usefully adopted to help us when we are considering how adults bring their own knowledge to both their understanding — and the construction of — their own academic texts. In his analysis, Bazerman (1985) outlines four contexts for examining the ways in which meanings are constructed through the process of academic writing: the object under study; the literature of the field; the anticipated audience and the author's own self.

Each time an adult student writes an assignment, she is also constructing her own knowledge and adapting her own knowledge bases within that piece of writing and negotiating the four contexts outlined by Bazerman. She is not merely replicating subject specific knowledge in a written form. The problem for many students is that reproducing academic knowledge can feel invalidating and constraining and can conflict with other more familiar 'ways of knowing'. Adults, with their own knowledge which may have led them to pursue certain areas of study, may find it difficult to negotiate the restrictions of the object under study, be confused when incorporating the literature of the field, find that anticipating the audience (the tutor) is not an easy task and, lastly, wrestle with the complexities of writing their own selves into their essay writing. Bazerman's analysis of academic knowledge gives us a way of conceptualising the complexities of writing academic knowledge for many students and highlights the ways in which the student has to interact with the construction of disciplinary knowledge from both an institutional and personal perspective.

Through developing new practices of literacy during their studies adult students are both constructing new meanings and constituting new knowledge bases. Individuals make meaning through interpretation of new experiences and new knowledge. Such interpretation is influenced by other experiences which are socially situated and culturally determined. In academic assignment writing, as Aitchison, Ivanic and Weldon (1994) make so clear, 'each word we write represents an encounter, possibly a struggle, between our multiple past experience and the demands of a new context'.

The focus of the present research has been on texts as processes, rather than the products or outcomes of adult learning, on the processes of reading and assignment writing, rather than on the student's finished assignment or the reading texts with which she engages during her studies. Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) emphasise the dynamic and fluid nature of genres in academic disciplines. Academic texts are seen as evidence of socially situated processes rather than products. Although their research is primarily concerned with established academic writers, as with Bazerman (1984), the approach that they take to the contested nature of academic genres can be usefully extended to address the difficulties that students may have in understanding the requirements of their written work within different courses throughout their studies.

Adult learning domains

The research has focused on three adult learning domains and the interrelationship between them. Each domain is firmly embedded in the other two; in that sense no domain — no site of learning — can be clearly separated from any other, and an understanding of one domain of learning requires knowledge and understanding of the other domains. This model of three domains (**Figure 1**) puts the cultural and social contexts of individual adult student learning firmly at the centre of any understanding of the production of texts for assessment and illustrates the relationships that exist between all the identified domains: cultural and

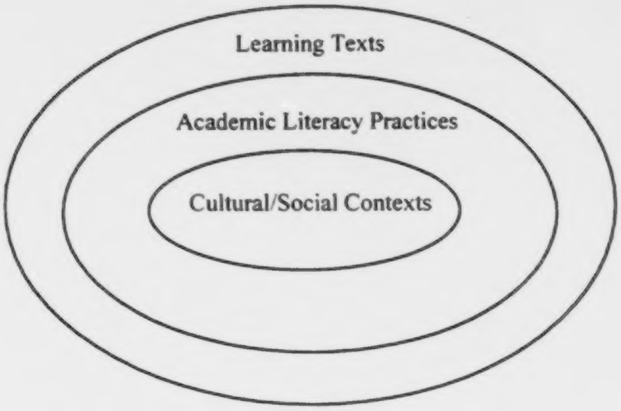

Figure 1

social contexts; academic literacy practices; learning texts.

As a starting point, the cultural and social contexts of study situate the circumstances in which any individual student learning is taking place. Literacy practices are at the heart of study and learning in higher education. These are the actual practices involved in the processes of reading and writing, which are central ways in which students learn new subjects and develop their knowledge about new areas of study. With its focus on practices, the research has been able to look at the different meanings that are produced for students as they study and complete their written assignments. The learning texts domain is concerned with the TMAs (tutor-marked assignments) and the ways in which students construct their academic knowledge through the production of these texts. The learning texts (TMAs) are produced through, and therefore the result of, the interaction of particular ways of reading and writing within diverse contexts. As such, they are more than transparent reproductions of subject specific, course based knowledge arrived at through writing assignments. They are — in Berkenkotter and Huckin's terms — the result of socially situated processes rather than simple products of assessment.

A focus on social context, I believe, can enable a more complete understanding of what is involved in the acquisition of academic literacy for adult students, by looking at the different practices involved in reading and writing distance learning texts. Such practices are themselves embedded within a range of cultural and social contexts and researching these gives us more understanding of the relationship between the course texts and students' wider worlds. Students come to their studies with other more familiar practices of literacy and attempt to adapt these to their studies with varying degrees of success. They may be more used to reading literature or newspaper articles or it may be more familiar for them to write work-based reports or personal letters. They may be used to writing collaboratively at work or reading documents for specific data. Additionally, they may not be used to having feedback and commentaries on their writing or may be used to working with very clear exemplars of written forms. Writing and reading may have previously taken place in communal office or home settings and not in individual private study sessions. At the same time, many students are drawing on their memories of literacy practices in other formal educational settings, such as school. Experiences of reading and writing for academic purposes may be connected to educational failure in the past.

Academic literacy practices mediate the relationship between cultural and social contexts and the final production of the TMAs. The understandings and interpretations of reading the course materials and the meanings that are attached to these will be drawn on by students when writing their own TMAs and therefore become embedded within the student's own text. The reason for examining the academic literacy domain is that this provides the opportunity to take a critical view of student learning and to examine some of the contradictions and constraints that are involved for adult learners, and therefore to find out more about the difficulties that students may encounter with their studies, which may ultimately lead to drop out or failure in higher education settings. In considering these three learning domains we are able to take account of different interpretations and understandings of text production and the ways in which these are embedded in cultural contexts. We can examine how texts are given meaning by the social contexts within which language is being used and the practices which surround their use.

Approaches to learning: reformulation or challenge?

The research has highlighted how adult distance learners seem to display two distinct approaches to their learning; approaches which are integrally related to literacy practices. The approaches are not specific to particular students but reflect individual students' positions with regard to course material in a particular context. I have termed these approaches 'reformulation' and 'challenge'.

Many students adopt a reformulation approach to completing assignments. Having read the course materials they interpret the task in hand to be to reformulate this material as closely as possible in their own writing. With such an approach students resist creating a dialogic relationship to the texts that they are reading. The primary purpose of assignment writing is seen as a reformulation of the course materials, to produce a text which is closely tied to the original texts but is still their own piece of written work. When students adopt this approach they are conceding to the authority of the course materials and are trying to replicate a particular academic perspective in their own writing. They read the course materials in a linear and detailed way and then attempt to reproduce as closely as possible — but using their own words — the gist of the course materials in their TMA. They may adopt familiar reading strategies and struggle with the sheer density of the texts as they move through from section to section relating it to their chosen assignment title. Students TMAs reflect the ways in which they have read and taken notes in a linear fashion and attempt to replicate this in assignments. The important thing about the reformulation approach is that students are attempting to replicate the text and the authority of the text.

Subject specific and disciplinary terminology are seen as key elements of the reformulation approach. Students identify that it is important to say and write things in particular ways, but most importantly to use particular phrases and words in their assignments to convince the tutor that they have adequately engaged with the course content. The reformulation approach is fundamentally concerned with an attempt to learn the discourse. The focus is often on terminology, and terminology is seen as a way into mastering a defined academic discourse. Tutor feedback can often emphasise the use of certain terminology and encourage students to rephrase their material in specific ways, using particular terminology to represent concepts that the student has represented through other language forms. The reformulation approach is closely tied to textual context, in a sense the texts are taken by students as reasonably transparent and are 'read off' for course content which the student then tries to reformulate in other ways without interference from other texts or other knowledge.

When students adopt the challenge approach they may be very explicit about their desire to take a specific course and relate it to their own wider cultural context. They often have a clearly defined personal trajectory which influences the ways in which they approach learning the course materials. This approach frequently challenges academic conventions, as students bring in their own personal perspectives and interpretations of the texts. They may be actively engaging with the course in terms of their own personal needs and contexts but their writing may still appear incoherent and unstructured to the tutor; she may be looking for evidence of understanding of the course materials in the way that she reads them. In effect, tutor feedback on TMAs may be quite confusing to students who believe that they have made an appropriate use of the course materials in writing their TMA. Additionally, feedback may seem very tied to a specific TMA content and not related to students' broader concerns in studying the course.

Making the links between personal commitments towards — and understandings of — course material and the academic study of what are often familiar issues can prove difficult for students. Instead of approaching their learning as if it were a separate sphere of their lives, learning, study and completing pieces of assessed work appear to be integral to students' wider lives and this is evident in the ways in which they approach the academic context. The course materials are seen as texts which challenge the student's own interpretations and understandings and are seen as a starting point for more reflexive engagement with learning. Interpretation of the course texts and the writing of the TMAs is firmly embedded within a personal framework of cultural and social contexts. Reading of course materials and the writing of the TMAs become part of a dialogic process. Questions are asked such as: 'How does this relate to other knowledge and ways of interpreting the world? What is valid knowledge for this particular course? Can I use examples from my own experience?' 'How far can I express my own ideas in my writing? Is it acceptable to use the first person in my writing?'

Challenge approaches are concerned with issues of epistemology and the construction of acceptable and valid forms of academic knowledge through student writing. This approach is particularly important for many adult learners because it is fundamentally concerned with issues of confidence, power and identity in academic settings and how these are embedded within academic texts. Central to our understanding of the challenge approach is an understanding of what adult students bring to their studies and the relationships between the production of their learning texts and the wider cultural social contexts within which they are learning. Adult learners in higher education are learning to construct their knowledge in ways which make it appropriate for assessment. Simultaneously, they are struggling to maintain a sense of themselves and the validity of other ways of knowing in their academic study. (Ivanic 1997; Lea 1994).

My paper will use examples from case studies to illustrate some of the struggles over literacy practices that these adult students have experienced during their studies and the repercussions that these have for the construction of academic knowledge. It will also elaborate upon the notion of 'reformulation' and 'challenge' for adult learners and make the distinction between these concepts and those of 'deep' and 'surface' learning. Through the examination of these issues I hope to illustrate the importance of considering issues of literacy and language more centrally in adult student learning.

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Working class culture, adult education and informal learning: beyond the 'cultural capital' bias to transformative community

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For most academic researchers and teachers today, 'working class culture' is a vacuous concept devoid of positive significance, creative capacity or distinct identity. Indeed, some intellectuals have written obituaries for the working class. In most advanced capitalist societies, bourgeois cultural dominance pervades both the academy and public sphere — in the manner that individualist sensibilities and aspirations of affluent class groupings (corporate capitalists, professional-managerial employees) are taken to be universally shared by all. Cultural expressions emerging from less affluent groups are only seen episodically in the general public sphere, most evidently in terms of labour disputes, as well as struggles for feminist and racial minority rights. Such expressions remain compatible with bourgeois hegemony, patriarchy and white privilege as long as they can be treated as either incorporable into a legitimated 'high culture', derivative from it as lower forms, or isolable in small enclaves. In any event, while aspects of sex and ethnic-based cultural sensibilities are harder to efface from subordinated identities, many people who exist by hired wage labour now rarely tend to think of themselves in social class terms and, if they do so, are just as likely to consider themselves as 'middle class'[1]. So what are the prospects for worker-centred popular education programmes intended to enable progressive democratic social change?

I will argue here that the collective capacity for positive cultural representation is still alive in the organised core of the working class, that working class people are at least as active as critical informal adult learners as those in the affluent classes, and that independent working class adult education programmes controlled by the organised class core provide a practical vehicle for revitalising working class culture. After reviewing the limitations of current theories of class cultures, especially as they relate to education and learning, I will briefly offer some evidence for this argument from surveys and case studies in Ontario, Canada's industrial heartland.

The cultural capital bias

Contemporary cultural theory has been developed largely within bourgeois dominated academies in splendid isolation from organised working class practice[2]. Hence portrayals of working class-based cultural practices have generally missed the creative agency and original features of the class culture, or at best conveyed them in disembodied and fragmented ways. Perhaps the most promising early exception was the educative engagement of the Italian Communist Party leader, Antonio Gramsci, with the workers' factory councils of Turin. Even from his subsequent isolation in jail by Mussolini, Gramsci (1971) was able to generate the basic elements of a counter-hegemonic approach to analysing class cultures in advanced capitalism. In spite of the material privations, a jail cell may have been a more fruitful vantage point for Gramsci's brilliant insights into class-based cultural struggles than the remote academy. Most later contributions to critical cultural theory by Marxist and other scholars have generally been produced in academic settings without sustained practical engagement with the organised working class. Numerous forces, including capitalist control of increasingly pervasive mass media and disruption of working class communities, have contributed to weakening the class capacity for concerted collective representation. But even sympathetic academic analysts' continued remoteness from the working class' own collective agencies has also aided and abetted this weakening through their production of excessively disembodied and fragmented versions of current working class cultural practices.

Among the most influential examples in the field of education and learning are the 'cultural capital' theories of Pierre Bourdieu and Basil Bernstein[3]. While a great deal of contemporary learning theory takes a class-blind and individualist perspective, both of these sociologists have developed structurally grounded models of class differences in cultural sensibilities and linked them to differential effects of schooling processes. In Bourdieu's case, as in human capital theories generally, an analogy is made between capital assets and human learning capacities. Children of the affluent classes, who have acquired familiarity with bourgeois cultural forms at home (through exposure to their parents knowledge and manners, 'good' books, museums, etc.) are seen to possess the means of appropriating similarly oriented school knowledge relatively easily. Working class kids, in contrast, find their unfamiliarity with these cultural forms to be a major obstacle to successful school performance. Bernstein makes similar arguments primarily in terms of language codes, with upper middle class children considered to possess more elaborated codes for abstracting and generalising from school curricular materials.

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[1] For a recent study which reviews various Marxist and Weberian theories of class structure and class consciousness, identifies mediated forms of class, gender and race consciousness, and examines their current expressions in a case study which focuses on unionised steelworkers and their wives, see Livingstone and Mangan (1996).

[2] See, for example, Perry Anderson's (1976) account of the twentieth century development of Western Marxism.

[3] From Bourdieu's wide array of writings, the most pertinent mature works are Bourdieu (1984, 1991). In Bernstein's narrower corpus, see Bernstein (1990, 1996). For the most extensive and insightful critiques to date, see Fowler (1997) and Sadovnik (1995).

Both scholars, with the aid of teams of colleagues, have done extensive empirical verification and refinement of their models, deepening both their complexity and their insights into the discriminatory cultural processes that operate against the working class in most schools. Both theorists expose the dominance side of cultural reproduction in excruciating detail. At least in this limited sense, their contributions are comparable to those of feminist and anti-racist scholars who have critically exposed the dominant codes and structures of patriarchal and racist cultural forms (Spender 1980; Said 1993).

But Bourdieu's and Bernstein's theories of class cultures have ignored a central rule of sociological investigation promulgated by one of the founding fathers of sociology they both build on, Emile Durkheim: to understand any social fact, we must study it through the full range of its variation. They never comprehend the creative cultural practices, independent education and learning activities, or collective cultural agency of the organised working class. Working class people are always reactive, atomised and marginalised in their perspectives, even in their most recent, empirically grounded works (Bourdieu 1993; Bernstein 1996). For example, as Fowler (1997, 11) observes, Bourdieu has exaggerated the cultural dispossession of the masses and excluded any popular art in his category of consecrated culture, constructing a canonical closure which is too complete and which blinds him to the existence of authorship within these popular art-forms.

The rediscovery of this creative agency, as expressed especially through the working class novel and the historiography of working class life, has been initiated by sympathetic intellectuals operating initially outside established academies and often engaged in adult working class education jobs, most notably Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson[4]. There are now vibrantareas of study of popular literature, working class historiography and ethnography which are making these subordinated cultural voices more widely heard. Much of this research is being conducted by individual scholars of working class origins who remain in continuing tension with the academies that employ them (Ryan and Shackrey 1984).

Of course, the popular education tradition has long been involved outside academic settings in empowering groups of working class and impoverished people through critical reflection on their own local conditions. Paulo Freire's conscientization approach to cultural animation (1970, 1996) is in some ways the reverse of Bourdieu's and Bernstein's preoccupation with structured forms of symbolic dominance. The conscientisation focus is on the group's own generative themes and problems, and movement toward resolving action. Besides general critiques of the oppressiveness of 'banking education', this approach has paid little attention to documentation of counter-hegemonic cultural forms, the wider recognition of which could sustain transformative cultural action beyond the small group level. Nevertheless, similar consciousness-raising methods have been effective tools in organising unorganised workers as well as building the civil rights and women's movements.

The challenge for progressive popular adult educators today is to combine the rediscovery and documentation of creative working class culture — including all its 'warts' and contradictions — with the best of bourgeois culture, to relate this creative culture to critical macro-structural coding analyses of the sort that Bourdieu and Bernstein have developed, and to do so in education programmes supported by the organised working class itself. There are historical precedents for such independent working class education (Sharp Hartwig and O'Leary 1989).

Some recent progressive adult education programmes supported by the local state and focused on unemployed and often dispirited working class people have had similar objectives and achieved impressive results at least on a temporary basis (Lovett 1983; Ward and Taylor 1986). But transformative education and learning initiatives have more likelihood of survival when they are supported directly by labour unions (see Newman 1993; Martin 1996). We will examine a leading case, the education programmes of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), in a moment.

Working class learning capacity: adult education and informal learning

By virtually every measure, we are now spending more time acquiring knowledge than ever before in the history of our continually learning species (Livingstone 1997a). Human capital perspectives, with their fixation on schooling, have tended to suggest that all significant learning is distributed in class hierarchical terms (Livingstone 1997b). This is definitely not the case. As Table 1, based on surveys of the Ontario adult population over the past decade, summarises, participation in further education courses is now only weakly related to level of prior schooling and occupational class. The previously documented gap in further education course participation between the more affluent, highly schooled and others (Courtney 1992) is closing. The incidence of informal learning, including both work-related and general interest learning, now bears no relation to class or schooling. This was also true in the array of empirical studies on self-directed learning projects initiated by my colleague Allen Tough (1979) a generation ago, which suggest there may never have been any relation. Several other, intergenerational findings from these recent surveys should also be noted. Even in Canada's relatively open class society, universities remain very effective reproducers of class-based credentialled knowledge privileges. The children of professional-managerial employees are more than four times as likely to obtain a university degree as those of industrial workers. Also, as Table 1 indicates, there is only a remote possibility (less than one percent) that those from working class origins who obtain a degree will remain in the class to share the benefits of this knowledge. In contrast, the incidence of informal learning remains very similar regardless of class origins and current class location.

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[4] See especially their own accounts of their adult education experiences in McIlroy and Westwood (1993) and Thompson (1968).

Table 1 Education and learning profiles by occupational class, Ontario adults, 1988-96

Occupational class	University degree %	Further education (annual %)	Informal learning (hours per week)
Corporate executive	80	25	12
Professional/manager	55	35	12
Professional inherited	50	40	12
Industrial worker	2	24	12
Worker inherited	<1	20	12
Total adult population	18	28	12

Source: Livingstone, Hart and Davie (1997)

People in all occupational classes also tend to spend similar amounts of time in work-related informal learning. However, there appears to be a huge gap between the affluent classes and the working class in the extent to which this learning is focused on their current job. Corporate executives and professional-managerial employees devote virtually all of their work-related informal learning to enhancing their current jobs, whereas industrial workers give only a small fraction of theirs (Livingstone 1997b). The vast majority of working class work-related informal learning is wasted in their current jobs.

Finally, the survey findings indicate that unionised workers spend a greater average amount of time in work-related informal learning than non-unionised workers (7 versus 4.5 hours per week). This suggests the existence of previously unexplored links between knowledge and power in workers' learning practices. Where worker-controlled education programmes are available, workers may be more likely to integrate their non-formal and informal work-related learning. More generally, the sites where subordinated groups have the greatest control over their social practices are the places where their own cultural knowledge reproduction and generation may be most frequent. The contemporary site where working class people are most concentrated and best self-organised is the labour union, and it is in such organised group communities that the creation of working class culture now should be most evident.

Working class transformative learning community: CAW LOCAL 222

In co-operation with labour union educators, I am conducting a comparative study of the non-formal and informal learning practices of unionised workers in auto, garment, steel, petrochemical and public sector industries (Livingstone, Hersh, Martin and Stephen 1994). The main aim of this worker-centred project is to document the full array of current learning practices and to give back the findings to aid in development of further union-based education programmes.

The unions with the greatest transformative cultural potential are probably those which constitute the largest immediate communities and have elected leaders strongly committed to social issues. A leading example is the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) which has the biggest industrial union locals in the country and a leadership which has long espoused social unionism and increasingly encouraged engagement in broader social movements (Yates 1993). In particular, since the CAW separated from its American parent in 1985, its leaders have demonstrated a strong commitment to continuing education through the rebuilding and expansion of a national education centre and provision of a growing array of educational programmes[5]. Many of these programmes are explicitly intended to build a community of workers concerned with challenging economic and social injustice (see Gindin 1995). Most notably, the CAW's Paid Education Leave (PEL) programme is a four-week, adult education course first negotiated by the UAW's Canadian Region in 1977. PEL is a residential programme which takes place at the national education centre. The PEL curriculum includes subject areas such as labour history, sociology, political science and economy as well as public speaking, communications and media literacy. Gindin (1995, 188) writes that 'PEL aims at providing working people with an understanding of capitalism, their place in this system, the role of unions as independent working class organisations, the history of workers and their organisations'. PEL's goal is to build leadership within the ranks and cultivate activists with both a commitment to the union and social transformation.

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[5] There have been two competing tendencies in the historical development of education policies and practices

The learning experiences of CAW local 222 members are the primary focus of one of our case studies[6]. Local 222 at Oshawa's Autoplex is the largest industrial local in Canada, with around 14,000 workers. This workers' community has its own internal economy: on any given shift, the Autoplex throbs to the rhythm of workers buying, selling and bartering a wide variety of goods and services. This community has a shared language and culture conveyed in the plant everyday as well as through various other means, including regular monthly general membership, retirees' and family auxiliary meetings, and publications such as the monthly Oshaworker. For example, the local 222 worker's speech is dotted with unique phrases such as 'ass-time' for downtime, and 'gloveball' is a popular local sport.

> There is a rich array of informal learning among local 222 union activists. For example: Like ... we can go sit down and have a beer, but we could be discussing union stuff and learning ... [W]e're supposed ... to watch a hockey game once, some buddies we brought over, we never talked hockey. We talked union issues and labour problems for the whole time and ... right from eight to one in the morning. *WCLS interview O2ARR2T.J96*

The wide array of organised educational programmes available to local 222 members provides exceptional opportunities for members to link their extensive informal learning with courses and programmes on virtually any subject of interest. There is a massive amount of 'working class cultural capital' here, being applied in many diverse ways. But PEL's capacity to challenge daily experience stands out for many participants. For example, this worker discusses her understanding of newspapers as shaped by PEL:

> I don't look at the paper in the same, same way that I used to ... when they were talking about media ... how they leave things out, you know they edit it to make it a certain way so you're not really told the true story ... [S]ome people read the paper like it's gospel, now you look at it and you go 'no, that's not true', they're contradicting themselves from like last week or the week before, or one reporter's saying something different from the other one. *PEL interview PEL002.A96*

Our evidence suggests that Oshawa autoworkers' enduring commitment to informal learning, growing involvement in organised union courses, and continuing participation in political education programmes like PEL are helping to build a grassroots, working-class transformative community. As another 222 PEL graduate told us:

> [T]he way it [PEL] really contributes ... would be the ... idea of humanity that I try to show to the people that I work with. Since Scarborough [Van Plant, part of CAW local 303] closed we have a lot of minority cultures ... I try to openly show them some kind of a welcome ... [T]hat's another thing from PEL too, I tended to ... all trade unionists are the same , so I ended up spending some time on the [GM-Suzuki] Ingersoll picketline, I talked with those...people, and I dropped into Scarborough [van plant demonstration] because it was a labour strife issue and I felt I should ... I wanted to be there ... I sort of have this ... sympathy, I guess...no, it wouldn't be sympathy, I just sort of feel for these guys. They've been jerked around by a corporation that's making a lot of money and there's no reason for it ... I can't see the underdog go like that. *PEL interview PEL004.A96*

Local 222 is one of the most concentrated and well-organised working class communities in the country. At this union local, and more generally in the CAW, there is more extensive engagement in political education than in virtually any other Canadian union. Programmes like PEL have now produced hundreds of social movement activists within the Autoplex. As a fall 1996 strike and plant occupation demonstrated, local 222 represents an important, fertile site of oppositional working-class cultural and economic struggle.

Concluding remarks

The creative cultural practices and extensive learning occurring within well-organised union locals should serve as a stiff antidote to the cultural capital bias for any researcher or teacher who cares to look. The

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within the CAW and its predecessor, the UAW. Roughly speaking, the UAW favoured 'top-down' education as a direct conduit to workers (see Reuther 1976). The CAW has been more inclined to view education's role as one which 'was to reinforce and consolidate [a culture of resistance]' (Gindin 1995, 223).

[6] See Livingstone and Roth (1997) and Roth (1997) for more extensive accounts of CAW local222 and workers' learning experiences.

working class culture expressed in these settings should not be romanticised; it remains full of contradictions and reactionary aspects. But, in spite of much academic opinion to the contrary, it is from these most concentrated and independent sites of collective expression of this class culture that struggles against bourgeois cultural hegemony and for democracy and economic justice are likely to be sustained.

This is the cultural process that Raymond Williams (1975, 241) aptly called the 'long revolution':

> I believe in the necessary economic struggle of the organised working class. I believe that this is still the most creative activity in our society. But I know that there is a profoundly necessary job to do in relation to the processes of cultural hegemony itself. I believe that the system of meanings and values which a capitalist society has generated has to be defeated in general and in detail by the most sustained kinds of intellectual and educational work.

The question is whether progressive intellectuals on both sides of the university-labour union barrier are up to this tremendous challenge. If they are, future Gramscis may flourish and enable the working class to withstand future Mussolinis.

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Action-based research: the impact on health practice of a masters programme in adult education

Maureen Lucas, Susan Davies and Lorna Cochrane

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Learning is intimately related to the world and affected by it (Jarvis 1987). Both the context of adult life and the societal context shape what, when, where, and how an adult learns. An effective educational design does not attempt to mould the learner: rather, the learners' needs mould the programme. In this symposium, teachers and graduates present their perspectives on one such programme, describe their studies and findings and resulting change, and invite dialogue on the future of such programmes.

The Adult Education concentration of the M.Ed. in Educational Psychology programme of McGill University has produced graduates who continue to grow and use their learning long after graduation. They remain intensely proud of their alma mater, believing that their experience was precious, and is worth describing and preserving. The impact of their commitment has been especially marked in the field of health care.

Growth of the programme

The M.Ed. in Educational Psychology at the McGill Faculty of Education is a 48 credit programme. There are a number of concentrations in the degree, one of them being Adult Education. When this concentration was being developed nine years ago there were three faculty members available to teach the courses and supervise students. Within a year of its creation all three had left the university, and since then the concentration has never had more than a one-quarter time commitment of full-time faculty. It has been dependent on part-time staff. All students who enter the M.Ed. programme are required to take courses in research methods, statistics, and general educational psychology. Those opting for Adult Education take, in addition, three required courses: Orientation to Adult Education, The Adult Learner, and Teaching the Adult.

The last requirement of the degree is to complete a Special Activity, worth 12 credits, which is defined generically as an independent project which improves practice. This responds to students' preference for exploring questions that emanate from personal experience. Consequently, there is great flexibility in the kind of study undertaken, and examples include experimental and quasi-experimental designs, needs assessments, pilot studies, curriculum design, workshop development, programme design, monographs, re-entry programmes for adult learners, and popular education.

Since the inception of the Adult Education concentration, the majority of students have been re-entry women from the health and social services. We have speculated on the reasons for this, and believe that there are probably four:

- There is a desire to move away from the professional perspective in which they have been trained in order to re-orient their thinking. This degree enables them to articulate teaching and learning as central to their work, which is particularly important given the transformations that have been occurring in health care.
- The courses are particularly relevant since most of the part-time instructors are graduates of the programme, with expertise in these fields.
- The programme met the learning needs of the first applicants and word of mouth led other colleagues to apply.
- The scheduling of the courses, in the evenings, and the possibility of part-time study is appealing.

The projects and their sequels

Susan Davies, nurse, graduate, research assistant, lecturer, and doctoral student

Interested in patient education, I explored the teaching of hospitalised surgical patients from the perspective of registered nurse practitioners by using quantitative and qualitative methods. In an exploratory study I found that while practising nurses see the importance of patient education, their knowledge base of theories of learning and instruction is weak: assessment of learning needs and learner characteristics, development of learning objectives, use of appropriate teaching strategies, and evaluation of learning was barely being practised (Davies 1993). There was no correlation between scores on use of theory and educational level nor length of experience. I identified their values regarding patient education, their minimal use of theory and research findings on patient education, their subject matter and pedagogical knowledge, and the impact of organisational factors on their patient education practice. Two consecutive studies then examined the teaching of patient education: the first was to explore the effects of a course for staff nurses on patient education, and the second was an investigation of the characteristics of a nursing director who advocates and enables research-based practice (Davies 1996). Firstly, a course on patient education was designed, following the principles of Adult Education, and offered to volunteer participants of a thoracic institute. Initial outcomes included cognitive and affective change, and a patient education package developed by each participant. However, six months later there was negligible evidence of lasting change. Following these disappointing results, meetings were held with head nurses and the nursing director in order to examine how to reduce the barriers to research utilisation. It became apparent during these meetings that the driving force to make the necessary changes came from the Director of Nursing. Her commitment to both continuing professional education and to patient education remained high despite enormous constraints due to changing patient populations and budget cuts.

Nolan, Owens, and Nolan (1995) have cited time, money, staff shortages, workload pressures, family commitment, and lack of encouragement from managers as being key deterrents to transferring learning into practice, and Wake (1987) advocates that education should focus more attention on means of overcoming these barriers to change. 'A genuine partnership between learner, manager, educator, and colleagues in the work environment will avoid initial enthusiasm being dashed by a lukewarm or even frosty reception on their return to the work environment.' The programme design was then modified to develop a team of instructors who took their teaching to the hospital units, continued in the role of coach, and achieved improved results. The success of this experience lead to a literature review on 'learning organisations'. This knowledge, and an ongoing belief in the value of action research, led to my acceptance of a position as Director of Nursing and Client Services in an organisation greatly requiring improved competence (Davies 1996). From this perspective I am attempting to enhance learning in a workplace that operates 24 hours a day and is experiencing shrinking resources. Using non-traditional approaches, and building a team of nurse teachers with degrees in adult education, I will explore the role of administration in facilitating workplace learning by using the methods of action research.

Lorna Cochrane, nurse, graduate, research assistant, and doctoral student.

I entered the Adult Education programme in the midst of health and economic reforms that are sweeping our country. As a nurse, an educator, and an administrator, I experienced a growing concern about the nature of educational programmes. The programmes of concern included: (a) professional nursing education programmes which were being integrated and a new programme developed, (b) general health education programmes which were encouraging citizens to embrace a new model of preventative health while the institutions downsize, and (c) social education programmes which were focusing on problems resulting from poverty and violence. I had found many of the educational programmes ill-equipped to deal with the current changes. Nowhere is this gap more evident than violence prevention programmes. These gaps led to my decision to return to school and seek new solutions.

Violence prevention in our communities is a complex phenomenon. The complexity is created by the character of the urban context in which interventions occur (Spergel 1995), the multifaceted nature of aggression (Goldstein 1994; Heusmann 1994), and the dynamics of human change and learning (Anderson, Reder, and Simon 1996). In this complex environment it is essential to appreciate, integrate, and adapt multidisciplinary perspectives and practices in order to work in partnership with various cultural, health, educational, administrative, and service groups. Adult Educators and researchers are pressed to extend their skills and the principles of Adult Education when working in this environment. Too often programmes are poorly focused and lack any systematic evaluation (Day, Golench, MacDougall, and Beals-Gonzalez 1995; Johnson and Johnson 1995; Wilson-Brewer 1991).

In my masters programme I designed, implemented and evaluated a programme for using healthy ways to deal with aggressive incidents and cope with stress. Participants were the staff of a university Admissions Office who had requested help in dealing with aggressive clients. Using an ecological approach, the programme design was based on the theories of aggression and violence, adult learning, and responsive evaluation. Increases of statistical and practical significance were found in participant (a) awareness of self, (b) ratings of self efficacy, (c) identification of signs of impending aggression, (d) use of preventative skills, and (e) sense of safety. Additionally there was a significantly reduced level of stress. This research was presented at the 1996 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association in New York and was submitted for publication to the *Journal of Evaluation and Programme Planning*.

My decision to enter into doctoral studies was based on the positive experience of my masters programme in Adult Education. Building on this programme I have conducted research and evaluation in an urban community that was struggling to reduce violence. This study involved partnering of a government health organisation, two school districts, community youth organisations, young offenders services, an urban cultural group, and a university researcher in the search for a peaceful community. In this multidisciplinary context, a common ground was found which incorporated diverse perspectives. This study has recently been accepted for presentation at the 1997 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association.

My current doctoral studies continue my quest for answers in the area of violence prevention. In my doctoral research I will investigate educational interventions designed to facilitate change toward non aggressive lifestyles. I will investigate the design and conduct of interventions which focus on individuals considered 'at risk' of being violent. This research incorporates theories of aggression, cognitive skill development, and Adult Education principles.

Maureen Lucas, dietitian, graduate, Special Activities Supervisor, and doctoral student.

Professional programmes are designed to move learners from the novice state to a level of expertise considered adequate for professional certification. It has been suggested that no such development can occur without critical thinking; without reflection for, in, and on practice (Schön 1983; McAlpine, Frew and Lucas 1991). As a clinical co-ordinator for the professional practice component of the undergraduate dietetics programme, my perception is that our students are not always engaging in this most crucial process. Therefore, as a masters special activity, I carried out a study in the area of journal writing as an aid to reflection for these students.

'Diary devices' classified by Rainer as description, catharsis, and reflection were used in analysing the students' writing, which was found to be about 45% reflective. However, this reflection seemed to be very much focused on the students' feelings about particular incidents rather than on their actual practice. Although, in the broad sense, there is no right way to reflect, Boud, Keogh, and Walker (1985) do identify three phases of reflection: (a) returning to (describing) experiences, (b) attending to feelings, and (c) re-evaluating the experiences. Looking at this scheme, the students in the study concentrated on the first two phases, but did not, to any great extent, re-evaluate their actual practice. The journal writing did not seem to provide the type of environment for the element, described by McAlpine (1985) as 'critical self-examination of one's remembered thoughts and actions in order to assess and learn from one's practice'. Categories of mentoring behaviour described by Daloz (1986) were used to analyse supervisors' written responses, which were found to be: 76% supportive, 2% challenging, 15% visionary, and 5% other types of response, such as procedural issues. The responses were few in number and, in retrospect, it was thought that more, and different types, of response may have encouraged the students to deeper and more productive reflection.

In 1995, continuing with this area of interest, I developed, implemented and evaluated a workshop entitled, 'Fostering professional development in students and others', in collaboration with the Department of Continuing Medical Education at the same university. This was targeted at dietitians who receive students for professional practice or 'stage', and the notions of mentoring behaviours and reflection were central themes. Of particular note here is that, in evaluating this workshop, the four level approach of Kirkpatrick (1959) was used. 'Reaction' is how the learners feel about the instruction; 'learning' is performance on in-class tests; 'behaviour' is the extent to which learners implement, or transfer, what they learned in class; and 'results' refers to the organisational benefits, stated in terms of organisational performance or return on investment derived from a course. This type of comprehensive data is rarely collected, even when resources are plentiful. Brandenburg and Schultz (1988) discovered that of forty-five Fortune 500 companies surveyed, 100 percent used participant reaction forms in their evaluation, while only 30 percent used measures of learning, only 15 percent used measures of behaviours, and none used measures of organisational benefits. The project was important because very little had been done in this area of giving formal guidance to supervising dietitians; they were now being given some basic tools for guiding students into the profession.

Continued intent in researching the internship setting has resulted in the planning of doctoral research to investigate the extent to which dietetics internships provide opportunities for learning in all of the domains considered relevant to developing competent practice. Millstein, Bobroff, and Restine (1991), looking at educational administration internships, identified three skill areas and ten different knowledge domains, and this study is likely to be based on these same ten domains, which appear to be pertinent to any profession. The scope of this research will be broad, to include consideration of teaching techniques, pacing and sequencing of activities, relationships, cultural factors and physical settings. Previous studies on internship have tended to focus largely on procedural issues, and somewhat on outcomes; little is documented concerning the day to day practices, the nature of the relationships between practising professionals and interns, and the cultural environment, and how these impact on the intern's learning .

Themes

These three stories are typical of many others experienced by nurses, recreation therapists, social workers, physiotherapists, and dietitians. Analysis of all products of the programme shows rippling themes. The Special Activities and the Adult Education programme have made a powerful impact on the personal lives and professional practice of the graduates. Importantly, some organisational policies and procedures have been influenced by their findings. In an inclusive university learning environment where students are mentored by programme graduates and share responsibility for the teaching and learning, an unexpected transformation has occurred. Building on theories of Adult Learning, and selecting those most meaningful to us, we found that personal learning and growth became a common product of our experience. Armed with the confidence of this transformation that goes beyond knowledge and skill acquisition, we stepped back into our professional roles with the courage to practice outside our former boundaries.

Where are we now?

The strength of the adult education concentration of the M.Ed. is that the course instructors and project supervisors are from the field and know it intimately. Also, they are clearly practitioners, as are the students. They visualise themselves as practitioner-researchers, and model the behaviour and thinking of professionals who pose questions about their work and its context, and then find ways of studying them systematically. This creates an ideal climate for facilitating personal and professional growth in students as well as institutional development in their work environment. However, these very strengths create weaknesses: this type of programme becomes marginalised within a research-oriented university. The lack of full time faculty carrying out programmatic research leads to questions about the legitimacy of the concentration, and in these difficult financial times, programmes such as this, that are not premised on base funding, are in even greater jeopardy.

Already, the situation is changing, and our discussion will describe the following influences:

- The increasing number of full-time M.Ed. students who are specialising in Adult Education.
- The growing proportion of this group who continue with doctoral studies. They therefore merge with students coming from the MA programme in Educational Psychology.
- The revisions of the doctoral programme that have included the speciality of Adult Education as a minor concentration.
- The unprecedented mix of two groups of learners in the core M.Ed. Adult Education classes: (a) the original group described in this paper and (b) younger doctoral students with more theoretical interest and less professional experience. These graduates from MA programmes do not have the action-oriented experience of the Adult Education Special Activity that is so valued by present graduates for its personal, professional, and organisational impact.
- The changing status of health practitioners in the M.Ed. programme: they have gone from being students who just come in to take evening classes to becoming part of the main stream student body. They have advocated and demonstrated the value of action based research and are viewed as role models.

Conclusion

In summary, the MEd. programme in Adult Education has challenged academic traditions. Full time practising professionals like ourselves have continued their education at the masters level, by moving outside their professional faculties, because they realised that education is fundamental to their work. Research and practice have been exquisitely intertwined, and relationships between teachers and learners have become reciprocal. The impact of the programme has been such that five years later we are still researching adult learning because it is so crucial to our practice.

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Restructuring adult education: research, policy and the state

John McIntyre, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia

This paper argues that the boundaries of adult education with other 'territories of provision' are being redrawn, not through the shadowy play of Zeitgeist but by the definite agency of state intervention. Yet scholarship in adult education seems poorly equipped to comprehend the contemporary state and its responses to economic globalisation, which are evident in the reshaping of social policy by economic rationalism, the restructuring of public sector agencies extending to the public university itself and the ascendancy of a neo-conservative politics which crosses traditional party-political boundaries (Marginson 1993).

The contradictions of the emerging 'postmodern' state may be preventing us from understanding how academic researchers can themselves be drawn into its interventions. Is this a cause for resignation and regret, or reason to put more effort into theorising the contemporary state and examining whether it might not be a site of struggle for a social-democratic politics?

The paper will argue that

- there are shifts in the nature of the contemporary state which need to be theorised as a consequence of economic globalisation
- one feature of this change is a new culture of 'corporate managerialism' in public administration which is useful in theorising state interventions in adult education
- the new public management culture employs research as a strategic tool and draws academic researchers into the work of policy formation
- policy formation under corporate managerialism is characterised by an interplay of policy and research perspectives
- these changes indicate that researchers should give a high priority to analysing adult education as social policy, as well as their own engagement with the state and the ways in which it is reconstituting their work as academics

The state, education and social policy

Analysis of the contemporary state appears to hold little interest for the field despite the fact that adult education has occupied a key place in social policy (Griffin 1987, Jarvis 1993) and despite the upsurge of scholarship examining the state and education policy (eg Ahier and Flude 1983; Dale 1989; Ball 1990, 1994; Marginson 1993; Taylor Rizvi Lindgard and Henry 1997). This may be due to the dominance of the liberal tradition in adult education and its ambivalence towards state intervention (cf. Jarvis 1993) whereas radical traditions see the state as enemy and adult education movements as oppositional (for example, Foley 1990; 1994). Both ignore the extension of the modern state's activities theorised in Dale's Althusserian analysis of education as state ideological apparatus (Dale 1989). Theorists of postmodernity resist generalising about institutions, let alone the idea of a postmodern state which Hinkson argues is emerging from the effects of communication technologies, network relations and their information flows (Hinkson 1991).

Much of the reaction to neo-conservatism is defeatist in tone and apolitical in response. This is not helped by analysing the state in terms which put it over 'against' the social organisation of adult education, denying the ways adult education is 'within' the contemporary state (for example, in Jarvis 1993; Foley, 1994). An alternative view recognises that while neo-conservative politicians may be 'rolling back the state' it is the welfare state that is displaced by new modes of intervention, particularly in response to economic globalisation (Yeatman 1991, 1993; Marginson, 1993). This requires a grounded and detailed theorisation of the emerging contemporary state and its neo-conservative politics.

Theorising the contemporary state

Yeatman's theorisation of the contemporary state provides a way of understanding state intervention in education as a response to economic globalisation (Yeatman 1991, 1993, 1994). In brief, economic globalisation, referring to such trends as the mobility of transnational capital and the intensification of competition in international trade, demands a 'competition state' whose prime role is to steer the economy to international competitiveness (Yeatman 1991, 109-113). There is a shift from the welfare state to a leaner and more efficient public sector to create competitive conditions for private sector investment. To accomplish this steering role, the emerging state shrinks the public sector and makes it more managerial in character (Yeatman 1993).

Yeatman also argues (Yeatman 1991) that the state is now 'complex' and 'interventionist' in character. The emergence of new social movements making claims on government has differentiated and 'dispersed' the state's activity so that it has become 'intertwined in complex ways with the agents of civil society' such as community organisations. (This point is crucial for the analysis I shall develop of adult community education in Australia).

Yeatman says this complex interventionist state is durable and 'a central site of social, political, cultural and economic struggle' over the distribution of associated resources, as major political élites attempt to marginalise social movements and their 'democratising claims', though she says the 'symbolic politics' involved are no longer 'containable' within familiar conceptions of the state.

There is an adoption of economic rationalism as a 'meta-policy' of government and a wholesale cultural change to public administration which she terms 'corporate managerialism'. This new bureaucratic culture is: outcomes-focused rather than rule-bound; flattens authority structures but exercises management prerogatives; professionalises bureaucratic work but subjects it to management control; humanises public service employment through a 'people-and-process' orientation but implements more stringent accountability practices; adopts meritocratic selection which admits cultural minorities but excludes the under-educated; opens decision-making to value-led debate, but subordinates values to technical administrative concerns; and in the absence of firm value commitments, produces technocratic managers indifferent to the social ends of their work (Yeatman 1991, 13-32).

Crucially, Yeatman argues that free market ideologues misread the logic of state interventionism involved in national responses to global economic competition, while liberals misread it as 'turning the state over to the market' or dismantling welfarism. Corporatisation of the public sector consolidates the activity of the complex interventionist state (1991, 35).

This analysis provides a framework for analysing the transformation of adult education as part of the reform of education and training in Australia.

Restructuring Australian adult education

For over a decade Australia has been subject to macro-economic reform and the restructuring of its education and training systems, led by a series of federal Labour governments engineering change through tripartite agreements of labour capital and government (see Tony Brown, this volume, 75-79).

The 'training reform agenda' has reconfigured adult education, historically organised at the margins of the highly bureaucratised education systems run by state governments (see Tennant 1990; Willis and Harris 1992; Foley 1995). Within adult education, the vocationalism of reform is often depicted as threatening the values and philosophies of (liberal) adult education. This counterposes 'adult' and 'vocational' in a way which denies the historical fluidity of the boundaries between technical, higher, vocational, general and adult education within state systems of provision.

Given the vocationalist agenda of restructuring, it is significant that adult education has been 'included' at all. How this inclusion was managed has something to tell about the workings of the contemporary state. I argue that there is an ongoing transformation of Australian adult education concurrent with the shift away from the welfare state not explicable simply in terms of the 'unleashing of market forces'. This transformation can be summed up as: a disengagement with the funding of adult education as public education through a communalisation of agency and the adoption of user-pays funding regimes; a recognition and privileging of community agencies as a sector of state-sponsored activity despite the great expansion of other forms of organised adult learning; and the strategic management of the claims of adult education organisations and movements by the new corporatised bureaucracy.

The *communalisation of agency* can be explored briefly here. In Yeatman's terms communalisation of adult education results from both the activism of the new social movements and the way the state has accommodated their demands. By and large, women's movements have created the community adult education agencies such as the Neighbourhood Houses (see Gribble 1990) and the rural community adult education centres (Hansen 1991). Yet at the same time, in NSW the state government forced the old evening colleges based in public schools to transfer to this 'community-ownership and management' model (see Tennant 1991).

Community-based adult education is thus the institutional form preferred by the contemporary state which represents it as a 'partnership' of government and community. Communalisation goes hand in hand with corporate managerialism, since community-based provision transfers both responsibilities and costs from government to communities, limiting the call on public funds while maximising the 'return to government'. The state's activity is now 'dispersed' through such agencies which it now manages at arms length through the strategic policy framework and targeted funding regimes (McIntyre 1995). The recognition is congruent with Yeatman's view of the state as intertwined with the organisations of civil society.

At national level, the recognition and inclusion of the 'adult community education sector' (ACE) was achieved by organised adult education movements lobbying government, especially through a landmark parliamentary inquiry (Senate Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training 1992) which defined it as 'the fourth sector' of education. Yet the 'inclusion' of ACE is congruent in other ways with the goals of corporatist government to limit the claims on the public purse and transfer costs of education and training from public to private agencies.

ACE has both practical and symbolic value to the state. Dependent on user-pays and impoverished as a result, the sector nevertheless exemplifies the ideal of 'market-responsiveness' that is the goal of training reform. ACE organisations have most of the supposed virtues of private providers and few of their defects. Community agencies can be put in competition with public sector agencies to make them more responsive and 'client focused'. Further, ACE organisations publicise their services in terms of the very rhetoric of lifelong learning which the state is promoting as a rationale for an economically driven learning society. Thus the very marginality of ACE has been a basis to recommend its inclusion in the economist ideal of de-bureaucratised and openly competitive training system.

It is in this context that the new educational managers have engaged policy with research.

Research, policy and the state

I am suggesting that both social movements and changing modes of control by the state together have worked to redraw the boundaries of 'traditional' adult education. However, I argue that the shift to the new culture of corporate managerialism has been instrumental in the transformation, and in this, the new bureaucrats have employed research as policy strategy and drawn academic researchers into their intervention.

Why should academic research become strategically important to the state? Not only because the new state is too lean and mean to do work that can be done by contracting out, but because university research holds some credibility in policy debates and can provide key information to those debates. Research can be important in dealing with powerful policy adversaries in employment-and-education mega-bureaucracies. The new adult education bureaucrats have had little option but to ride the tiger of training reform and try and 'position the sector' advantageously. Thus academics can be useful allies.

I argue that strategic policy research is constructed in specific ways by corporate managerialism, and that this cannot be understood in terms of impact and dissemination models often described in the literature (cf Husen and Kogan 1984; Finch 1986; Anderson and Biddle 1991; Halpin and Troyna 1995). Rather, there is an *interplay of research and policy perspectives.* The new public sector manager thinks of policy in strategic terms and opens decision-making to value-led debate on the basis of the best available information. The tertiary educated new managers are oriented to available knowledge bases and comprehend research perspectives relevant to policy issues, whereas the old public service bureaucrat had expertise accumulated over a long career in the portfolio (Yeatman 1993). Hence, bureaucrat and researcher may negotiate common understandings about the role of research in policy.

Moreover, the university and its academic workers are also subjected to educational restructuring by the complex interventionist state — internally, through a corporatising of authority structures, and externally, through research consultancy. Academics develop network relationships with bureaucracies which weave the universities into the state's dispersed activity. Consequently, the academic, far from being a naive researcher, may acquire sophisticated policy understandings — indeed, strategic policy work cannot be done without them — and these understandings, critically examined, can feed into the theorisation of adult education as social policy, as I hope this paper demonstrates.

It is difficult to represent the complexity of the negotiated relationships of research and policy particularly through brief 'examples' of strategic policy work. However, I will focus on some recent research around three key policy arguments and highlight tensions between research and policy in particular constructions of policy.

Determining the vocational quantum of ACE

The politics of inclusion in the new 'national' vocational education and training arrangements challenged ACE to demonstrate its vocational worth. The state adult education authority commissioned research to define and measure the vocational activities of the sector (McIntyre, Morris and Tennant 1993). The dauntingly narrow brief was interpreted by the researchers as needing a more complex and multi-dimensional account of the vocational contribution of the sector — an account in some sense 'for' the sector. Thus the research reframed the problem of the 'vocational quantum' of ACE in ways that could be used by its advocates.

This academic cheek was rewarded with a second and larger project to document the 'vocational outcomes' of ACE from a range of multiple perspectives of the learner, skills formation, industry and the community (McIntyre, Foley, Morris and Tennant 1995). Hence the policy construction of 'needed research' shifted significantly towards multiple research perspectives elaborating arguments of the value of ACE supported by detailed empirical work (for example, showing some 20% of general adult education participants were enrolled for directly work related reasons, the role of ACE in training small business and the importance of rural small centres to the social and economic needs of their communities).

Refuting the myth of ACE as 'second chance education'

Part of the politics of 'inclusion' of adult community education in national policy has been the argument that it provides 'second chance education' for 'disadvantaged groups'. This is meant to counter the deeply held view of some policy adversaries that liberal adult education is both privileged in clientele and vocationally inconsequential.

The research unfortunately ran contrary to the view that community adult education performs a key role in equity by showing that general adult education participants are relatively advantaged in education and employment. This discomforting result was met by several strategic policy responses — first, to reframe the value of ACE as promoting lifelong learning across the workforce, and second, by developing strategies to target non-participation of disadvantaged groups.

The idea that under-resourced community providers play a key role in redressing disadvantage is highly attractive to the state, since 'equity' outputs from a marginally funded sector are cheap at the price, but highly ambivalent to the providers, who on this account can be assured that they will receive no extra funding to maintain their good work. Equity would then have been marginalised as the responsibility of community. The economic reality, however, is that a largely user-pays adult education system has the opposite effect and works to exclude the disadvantaged.

Showing how current funding regimes discourage equity in participation

If the policy ideologies of the new bureaucrats were ruled entirely by economism, a project to examine the economics of funding ACE could easily have prescribed a 'unit costs of course delivery' methodology, and not, instead, have invited an analysis of the political economy of ACE organisations. Nevertheless, the project was meant to inform a change in funding regime (McIntyre, Brown and Ferrier 1997).

The research exposed the varying fortunes of community-based adult education providers under user-pays and marginal government assistance. Not surprisingly, it showed that the ability of community providers to generate fee incomes from a user-pays regime is severely constrained by the population density and affluence of their localities. Detailed postcode analysis of participation showed that the combined effect of the user-pays system and current government funding regime was to encourage participation in 'advantaged' localities and inhibit it in less advantaged. Hence, the research demonstrated that lack of 'equity outcomes' results from maintaining historical (untargeted) funding when provision has been re-organised on a 'community-pays' basis.

These examples may suggest how research which is commissioned in a turbulent policy environment can interact with competing policy discourses to produce particular strategic directions, so that 'restructuring' is a negotiated and managed accomplishment.

Conclusion

Commissioned research is often seen as dirty work subordinated to policy imperatives, and restricted in scope by project timelines and policy agendas. Sometimes it is, but it is also true that policy objectives may often require both depth and complexity and invite and tolerate the contradiction of current policy positions. Corporate managerialism is as likely to demand an elaboration as a suppression of research perspectives and may contrive the productive interplay of research and policy.

For this reason, academics engaged in state-sponsored research are not mere tools of the state since this implies they are 'judgemental dopes' (Garfinkel) prevented from bringing critical perspectives to bear in policy discourses. Further, this instrumentalist view denies the connections between the bureaucracy and social organisations in the contemporary state, which suggests that researchers may perform important functions in mediating the claims of social movements and interpreting the complexities of the field to the bureaucracy. They may also interpret the complexities of policy to the field, and reflect back to the field its own value and worth. As Yeatman suggests, such dynamics suggest the need for an analysis of state power which recognises interchanges across the boundaries of agencies.

This account also rejects the view that 'adult education' scholarship is best formed in the pure confines of the cloister, if that is in any sense now possible. The conditions of an emerging 'politics of discourse' (Yeatman 1991, 120ff) challenges academics to understand if not participate in the dialectics of policy formation, at least while there is ideological space to do so. Moreover, I argue that the exigencies of policy work in the contemporary state need not inhibit but may indeed stimulate innovation in theory and method and develop a critique of the state grounded in knowledge of its processes.

The evidence of this paper is that the field should reframe its priorities to take more seriously the development of adult education as social policy. However, the poverty of social analysis of adult education (running right through to the heart of the adult learning project) is a serious impediment to this development.

Because the public university is itself a clear target of education and training reform, academics cannot easily escape the reconstitution of their work by social and economic policy. Hence, the point of this paper is not 'whether' academics should participate in state-sponsored research that redraws the boundaries of adult education. The point is that an era of neo-conservative politics and state intervention is compelling us to give critical attention to education as social policy as part of defending the university and the viability of adult education as a field.

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Boundaries, border crossings and context(s): learning as 'negotiating meaning'

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> Literate acts are sites of construction, tension, divergence, and conflict. They happen at the intersection of diverse goals, values and assumptions, where social roles interact with personal images of one's self and one's situation ... [they] are often *sites of negotiation* where the meaning that emerges may reflect resolution, abiding contradiction, or perhaps just a temporary stay against uncertainty (Flower 1994, 19; emphasis my own).[1]

To understand learning experiences as 'sites of negotiation', 'boundaries' and 'border crossings' are useful and significant metaphors. This is particularly so in South Africa where many adult learners cross the formal border into higher education with relatively poor previous experiences of formal education or schooling. Much international literature on adult learning highlights the barriers or feelings of 'disjuncture' facing non-traditional mature learners once they have crossed the formal, institutional boundary (Weil 1986; Fulton 1989; Taylor *et al.* 1988) and it has been argued that there is often a tension between formal institutional access, and curriculum or epistemological access.

Given that new policy initiatives in South Africa have significantly widened the possibilities for access (see DEAL 1994; Education White Paper 1995), I believe that both the possibilities as well as the problems of new policies can be evaluated and better understood through understanding learning experiences. It will enable us to illuminate boundaries yet also potential border crossings. This paper sets out to examine these issues from a particular angle. While many students do struggle to cross the epistemological boundaries and we need to be mindful of this, others succeed — often against all odds. This paper draws on research exploring the experiences of successful first time non-traditional mature learners. The main question was *what does the process of constructing a 'successful' learner role entail?*

The question is addressed through qualitative case study research exploring how this role and combination of conventions is perceived by different students. Theoretically the paper draws on a socio-cultural/constructivist framework, arguing for an understanding of learning which, following Flower above, takes account of contextually-located processes of meaning making rather than decontextualised accounts of learning. Key concepts are learner role, meaning-making and negotiation.

Understanding learning: meaning-making and negotiation in context

While it is clear that 'barriers' are a strong feature of many students' experiences of higher education, given that I am investigating 'success', the notions of barriers or boundaries need to be seen as potential points for border crossings. The rest of the paper will explore and develop this argument.

Learning and context: macro approaches

Socio-cultural approaches have addressed the concern with boundaries and the relationship between experience, learning and context. Gee (1990) in his study of language and literacy, provides a useful distinction between the processes of 'acquisition' and 'learning'. According to Gee:

> *acquisition* is a process of acquiring something subconsciously by exposure to models, a process of trial and error, and practice within social groups, without formal teaching;
>
> *learning* is a process that involves conscious knowledge gained through teaching or through certain life-experiences that trigger conscious reflection. (Gee 1990, 146)

Gee argues that most of our life experiences involve a mixture of acquisition and learning. While we are better at performing what we acquire, we consciously know more about what we have learnt. Learning thus facilitates 'meta-learning', which can lead to power because it enables students to manipulate and analyse. However, it is through *acquisition* that we master discourses by 'enculturation' into social practices. Acquisition therefore needs to precede learning; for success, the discourses of higher education need to be acquired and cannot be learnt. However, this is no easy process — discourses are not static and consistent across institutions (Flower 1994; Street 1996).

This frame is useful in that it provides a 'macro' lens on the possibilities for learning and thereby 'success'. However, by locating meaning and agency in the centre of discourses, Gee conceives of them as 'tight, binding entities' (Thesen 1994). Given what has emerged in my study, I feel that this is a limiting way of understanding learning: stories of conflict and tension yet also of agency, decision-making and awareness.

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[1] . For Flower, a 'literate act' is an individual constructive act that does not merely invoke to participate in a literate practice but embeds such practices and conventions within personally meaningful, goal-directed use of literacy.

Negotiation and discourse: learning as making meaning

Thesen (1994), drawing from a socio-cultural/sociolinguistic frame and extending Gee's position, argues persuasively for an approach which attempts to understand learning in relation to broader contexts. In her study of language acquisition and academic literacy, she develops an understanding of discourse as

> a process of meaning exchange ... in a given context. Individuals have differing access to these patterns of exchange in different contexts (Thesen 1994, 25).

This is an understanding which brings together the view of discourse as negotiated meaning, but with the recognition that different students have differing access to this process of negotiation. Such an approach locates meaning in the individual, yet without losing the tensions and contradictions this poses — it assigns a stronger role to the individual as agent, acting sometimes from the centre, and at other times from the margins, border crossing, and making decisions (Thesen 1994, 56). In this way she helps us to understand the way discourses relate, and what individuals do about this:

> Locating meaning in the individual does not mean that I am down-playing the social, but trying to find a starting point that is more profoundly social, in that it deals with human action, which must surely be at the heart of the social (Thesen 1994, 56).

For me, this means understanding how accounts of successful learning, while located within a broad frame of discourse acquisition, also need to be cognisant of the different forms this might take for different students.

Learning and roles: meaning making in context(s)

Before we move to the cases, I want to introduce the notion of 'role' as I believe that it is within roles that meaning is made and negotiated — it is *'meaning making made active'*. As different people relate differently in the same role, it is the mediating acting part or social construction that relates the individual to society. In adult education, it is a particularly useful concept and way of drawing on students' experiences given the multiple roles that adults play out in their lives, the learner role being but only one (Morphet 1992).

A paper highlighting the importance of role in learning is Kasworm's (1990) study of adult learners in formal higher education settings. Drawing on, and extending socio-cultural theory of Vygotsky and others, she explores adult learners' patterns of interaction with the higher education context. She identifies four patterns of interaction — all of which look at the kind of learner-teacher relationship, the kind of learner role students identify for themselves, as well as their own perceptions of what higher education learning is about. The four patterns are: conflict, withdrawal, accommodation and transformation. A particular point I found interesting in Kasworm's analysis and application of theory is her understanding and re-interpretation of the Vygotskian notions of 'expert' and 'novice' and the resulting learner-teacher relationships. She argues that while adult learners might well be considered novices in relation to specific tasks or skills, the fact that they bring a social context and wide range of experiences with them into learning, also positions them as experts in other ways. This links with what has emerged in my study, in particular with my understanding of the need to take into account both the macro issues of discourse and structure and the micro issues of meaning making, negotiation and learner role construction.

While useful, I find her study limiting. Her analysis of her learners' engagement seemed to imply a relatively straightforward relationship between learning and role construction — it seemed too easy to categorise her learners the way she does in her study. In my analysis, I extend Kasworm's analysis and argue that we need to understand that for each student, there are often multiple and even contradictory patterns which emerge in their experiences of learning.

A case study of learning

In this section, I shall discuss the case study of learning which has been the focus of my ongoing research. I shall introduce the context of the course and then, via slices of the qualitative data, attempt to link the accounts which emerged with the framework that has been developed thus far.

Context: the certificate programme

At the University of Cape Town (UCT), certificate-level adult education has traditionally been non-formal, drawing relatively small numbers of practitioner-students into the classroom. Access to the institution was granted on the basis of previous experience; programmes lacked formal accreditation and assessment took on the same non-formal status. Students entered with the role of practitioner firmly in place and this was built on during the year-long course — the notion of the 'critical, reflective practitioner' (Schön 1983; 1987) guided thinking behind the curriculum design and teaching approaches adopted. Students were thus provided with an opportunity to reflect on and further develop the skills and competence they already possessed.

Given recent policy initiatives in South Africa, new opportunities are being created for adult learners to access formal higher education, in some cases via alternative access routes. A case in point is the Certificate in Adult Education, Training and Development at UCT which was formalised in 1995. A policy of alternative access was put in place whereby learners were granted access to the programme primarily on the basis of work experience. However, together with this, the course now offered formal accreditation and formal written assessment was introduced. Thus while in the past non-formal programmes were aimed at assisting practitioners to improve on their practice via critical reflection, the Certificate course now had a twofold aim: the further development of practitioner competence *together* with the development of academic skills/competencies. It could be argued, following Gamble (1994, 3), that where we did not notice or attend to (learner) role discrepancy before (on non-formal programmes)

> the transition to the formal learning role will have to preceded by that complex activity known as 'unlearning' if they [the students] are to be successful in achieving the learning task.

During my ongoing work with the students I observed that while many struggled with the new demands of learning in a formal curriculum and particularly with assessment, there were students who, in my view and given their assignment results, were 'cracking the cultural code' (Bock 1988) of the classroom discourse. Many of these students did not possess experience of formal university education; some of them had not had the opportunity to complete formal schooling. Yet they were doing well and succeeding on the course. It seemed as if they were finding ways in which to acquire the discourse, and thereby engage in successful learning. Given that the course was in its first formal cycle, it could be argued that there was no clear sense of what the discourse expectations would be — there was not yet a clearly defined social practice in which discourse conventions would be followed in a relatively normative way. Therefore, when such practices are in flux, just taking shape,

> and when the social action is perhaps oppositional or in some way problematic ... one might expect innovative combinations of conventions. (Fairclough 1992, 11)

The next section will examine two cases of learning, highlighting contrasting processes of negotiation, meaning-making for success and learner role construction. The research project involved four case studies; for the purposes of this paper however, I have chosen to select two which for me, highlight contrasting patterns of interaction and meaning-making.

The cases

Yasmine[2]

> 'Just a number on the factory floor ...'
> 'Maybe I'll quit ... tomorrow'

Yasmine (35) is a single (widowed) parent of two children who lives in Mitchell's Plain, a largely working class, 'coloured' community in Cape Town. Having grown up in Diep River (now a white residential area) the family was *'chucked out'* during the height of the Group Areas forced removals under apartheid. While she said that she was not directly involved in politics, she was made aware of them through the years:

> [w]hether or not you're interested in it, you're always drawn into it ... [i]t's experience that's political ... my life, the way I came to be where I am

After leaving school before completion, she worked as a machine operator in a clothing factory. When she decided to leave, it was to

> help myself ... I was fed up with being a number *[on the factory floor].*

The primary pattern I identified in Yasmine's learning experiences is that of conflict. However, there was also evidence of withdrawal and accommodation in her account. Given the linkages between her personal and learner identities, Yasmine's experience demonstrated a fairly high sense of anxiety and conflict and *'I wanted to give up at some stage'.* Students who find learning a site of conflict, often experienced life difficulties and 'they are unique in the intensity and breadth of their personal life difficulties' (Kasworm 1990, 11). In terms of the kind of learner role she saw for herself, Yasmine felt that she was

> more on the outside, I think, sort of looking in.

This is clearly a case of the 'solo learner', a pattern of engagement Kasworm argues is indicative of the withdrawal pattern. This was clearly evident in her relations with other students, with the lecturers and with her processes of writing. While the role of lecturers was important in her learning, she felt that *'there'll always be this power thing'.* As Kasworm puts it, learners interacting with higher education from this angle, speak of 'self-imposed isolation' from other students and they struggle to maintain a belief in themselves. Their end goal is to meet external expectations in their lives and to have same status as fellow workers. Yasmine spoke about the fact that there was conflict between herself and the *'professionals'* on the course whom she perceived as thinking they were superior to her because of their formal job status, clearly a case of some students being 'in the discourse' and she being 'outside it'.

In her writing, she seemed to find a way to express some of her anxieties and to make meaning out of her experience. The poem 'Discourse' below from which I have chosen to quote the first and last verses, is a good example of Yasmine's contrasting experiences during her learning and the way she expresses this.

DISCOURSE
We are being told about
The roles we play

---

[2] Both the names of the students are pseudonyms

> The discourse that we follow
> As if we didn't know
>
> There's groups that feel they've been there
> Others feel they'll never get anywhere
> It's clear to them, but what about the rest of 'em
> I'm lost!!
>
> Through all of this, assignments follow,
> Handouts to read and books to borrow
> I think I'll quit ...
> Tomorrow.

For me, there is a third pattern that emerges in this account, namely accommodation. Her need to see herself as *'student material'* is in relation to the course and in this way, it does have some 'authority' for her in shaping her experience. While I have argued that withdrawal was also demonstrated by Yasmine in her account of her learning experience, particularly in her experience of assessment, this did not totally obscure her success due to the fact that it was balanced by the other two patterns discussed above. In other words, while Yasmine's experience was difficult and often tinged with turmoil and conflict, she found ways to negotiate meaning — she also saw herself as being able to rise up above this conflict.

Tembi

> 'Jazz music and picnics ...'
> 'To be a role student'

Tembi (44) is a single parent of a teenage daughter. She grew up in Cape Town and lived initially in District Six (a 'coloured' area and a crucial site of forced removals). The family was classified African, but Tembi explained that her mother was *'very, very fair'* and often mistaken for a *'coloured lady'*. Tembi spent her high school years at a private boarding school outside Cape Town[3], a decision that she took herself because she *'hated the whole system'* of state schools where the teachers were *'forceful and bossy'*. Her high school years, in contrast, are remembered with fondness. This is particularly the case with her teachers (white, English-speaking). She indicated that what she liked about Bethal College

> is that we didn't come [home] in June ... so we used to be entertained — picnics, going to the beach, campfires ..

She also attached a lot of status to studying at UCT, which she saw as a *'highlight'* in her life. She saw the Certificate course as being for *'people who were disadvantaged'* and felt that

> if you want to be something, this course can take you far.

In this case study, I identified two patterns of interaction: a primary pattern of accommodation and a secondary pattern of transformation. She attaches a lot of importance to the value of learning and of the university as being able to provide it. For Tembi, the notion of a *'real class'* and that we are *'not playing'* is an indication of her acceptance of the learning context as having validity. In terms of the kind of learner role she constructed for herself, she saw herself in many ways as the 'novice':

> dedication ... you expect them to do their work ... you know if you do your work, you'll be the role student[4]

In her relationship to the lecturers, she raised the issue of 'dependency' on us, although later indicated that this is not meant in the pure sense of the word, but more that she sees lecturers as *'guiders'* — Vygotsky's notion of mediation. There are many references in her discussion of doing things right so that she would not *'appear stupid'* to me and in order to be a *'role student — do your work, take learning seriously'*. The fact that she regularly attended the tutorials, an optional extra-curricular activity, is testimony to this. It is also evident in her comments on her writing where she wrote so that *'you could read something that made sense'*.

In some ways, Tembi entered, unlike Yasmine, as an 'acquirer' (Gee 1990) — her schooling and home background were not that different from more traditional university students. Her processes of negotiation and role construction enabled her to 'take on' the traditional role of the university student. She also suspends other important experiences in her life when taking on this role and this allows her to cross the border into the discourse of the course more easily. I feel her particular style of accommodation is the 'exploration beyond expertise' pattern as Tembi 'thoroughly enjoys her learner role' (Kasworm 1990). However, while she values the expert-novice relationship, she sees herself as gaining new meanings for herself as an individual. I therefore see evidence of a secondary pattern of transformation as there are some linkages between learning in the classroom and learning outside across other contexts. She speaks of how she came to understand more about *'society, different views and how different people think'* and how she drew on both work experience and other texts in the library to expand and refine her learning.

Conclusion

In this study of learning, I have argued that the ways in which learner roles are constructed and the context(s) within which learning takes place are crucial to understanding success. Success in turn needs to be understood as a process of boundary negotiation and meaning construction. For Yasmine, this was through her writing, finding a way to express her personal feelings in relation to her learning on the course; for Tembi, this was in being the 'model' student and working hard at this role. Thus while this is a unique process for different learners, it is at the intersection of the individual and the social and through the construction of learner roles that meaning is made and success attained.[5]

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[3] Given the period during which Tembi attended school, it would have been highly unusual for an African student to have attended a private school outside of the system of 'Bantu' education.

[4] By 'role student' Tembi was implying 'model' student

In addition however, if we understand that learning contexts are quite specific discourse communities, and that both macro and micro issues impact in direct ways on opportunities for learning and success, it is clear that success in one context will not necessarily guarantee success across a range of other learning contexts. A key issue therefore for further research are assessment practices and the role they play in shaping learning experiences across contexts. This was brought home to me by observing Tembi and Yasmine on the Advanced Diploma course in the department which they accessed on the basis of their Certificate success. Tembi still comes to me for assignment support and is finding the Diploma difficult; Yasmine was heard to comment in the corridor (after failing her first assignment on this course) '*perhaps I am not student material after all*'.

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[5] I need to add here that the notion of 'success' in not unproblematic: from the point of both who and what determines success within and across contexts

Sustaining social purpose in the current policy context

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Some facts about living in Britain today:

- of the population lives in poverty
- of households have no adults in paid work
- of all dwellings are officially classified as 'unfit for human habitation'.

(*The Observer* 13 April 1997)

As one contemporary commentator puts it: 'Inequality is perhaps the most salient fact in contemporary British society' (Hutton 1997). At the outset, we wish to insert a note of caution in relation to the title of the conference. Borders and boundaries are essentially neutral ideas, intrinsically neither good nor bad. In their deployment in the real world, however, they work in deeply ambivalent ways. We are therefore uneasy about the discursive force of the conference rationale. Borders and boundaries effect closure, but there are different kinds of closure. Some closures protect and defend the kind of vested interests which legitimise the stark inequalities catalogued above and, in fact, suggest that there is no alternative; other closures protect and defend principled positions, purposes and priorities. The conference title does not seem to reflect the necessary demarcations and discriminations which enable us to be clear about what social purpose might mean in the world today.

Our particular interest is in how community-based adult educators and other cultural workers cross borders in order to engage with the condition of postmodernity as it is manifested in the lived experience of communities and, at the same time, maintain the boundaries of commitment and discrimination that are a precondition for asserting a common and collective sense of social justice. In our view, there may be a danger of separating purpose from process in our work. What matters fundamentally is purpose, and this is precisely what we need to think about before we seek to cross borders and break boundaries.

Indeed, our argument is that in these so-called 'postmodern times' there are certain solid and significant moral and political borders and boundaries, in our case characterised historically by the broadly socialist project and adult education's role as an agency of this, which must not only be recognised and respected but which also, in some cases, urgently need to be re-erected. The reassertion of the social purpose tradition and commitment in adult and community education helps us to do this. Historically, this tradition locates adult education as an integral part of progressive social movements: as part of the common cause of emancipation, the collective advance of working class interests, and the political project to create a more just and egalitarian society. It is at once an educational philosophy, an intellectual commitment and an ideological position. As such, it constitutes, in Raymond Williams's words, an important 'resource for a journey of hope' because it reminds us that there is no project and no cause without clarity of purpose:

> The dynamic moment is ... in the difficult business of gaining confidence in our own energies and capacities. It is only in a shared belief and insistence that there are practical alternatives that the balance of forces and chances begins to alter. Once the inevitabilities are challenged, we begin gathering our resources for a journey of hope. If there are no easy answers there are still available and discoverable hard answers, and it is these we can now learn to make and share. (Williams 1983)

In seeking these 'hard answers', it is imperative to understand that some borders and boundaries are non-negotiable precisely because they delineate issues of purpose, matters of principle and differentials of power which are apparently all too easily fudged or simply disregarded in the relativism and particularism of some postmodernist accounts. These demarcations have to be distinguished from others which, for example, artificially compartmentalise professional practice or prevent us from engaging effectively with the lived realities of ordinary people in the contemporary world.

As teachers and researchers with specialist interests in community-based adult education and community work, we feel that we are well equipped to cross certain borders and to break certain boundaries in terms, for instance, of our academic disciplines, professional concerns and public constituencies. At the same time, however, this process only makes sense and matters when it is grounded in a common purpose which requires that particular borders and boundaries of purpose and principle are upheld.

In making the necessary discriminations, we are not helped by the current preoccupations of much 'practical' adult education with 'technical rationality' (Collins 1991; see also Welton 1994), on the one hand, or of much 'theoretical' adult education with postmodernist deconstruction (when the challenge is surely to *re*construct?), on the other. Neither encourage adult and community education to reconnect with its historical roots in democratic social purpose. Nor do they assist higher education in reasserting its critical role. The loss of historical consciousness and critical distance is a major impediment to the development of purposeful practice in the current context in which higher education is rapidly becoming not only the object but also a key instrument of the dominant hegemony.

The policy context and the politics of research

In our research, which is concerned with how workers sustain a commitment to social purpose, we characterise the present policy environment in adult and community education in terms of the following six key features: *managerial culture*, with all the attendant paraphernalia of narrowly conceived forms of quality assurance, competence and performance measurement; increasingly severe *resource constraints*, often in the form of savage cuts in funding and loss of both jobs and provision; *competition and marketisation*, forcing agencies and workers to fight each other for survival; the *restructuring of welfare*, reconfiguring the relationship between the statutory, voluntary, private and informal sectors; the *ideological thrust of policy*, which seeks systematically to redefine 'public issues' as 'personal troubles' (Mills 1970) and to depoliticise responsibility by individualising it; the *reorganisation of local government*, which (in Scotland at any rate) has significantly reduced the resource base available to finance public services.

Given this context, the prospects for locally-based, responsive adult and community education seem bleak. On the other hand, as the historical analysis of Brian Simon has consistently demonstrated, the unintended outcomes of policy may be as significant as its intended outcomes:

> The historical record clearly shows that there is nothing inevitable about educational advance. Far from progress being linear, advances are more often met by setbacks, by new crises, by ideological and political struggles of all kinds. (Simon 1985)

It is up to us purposefully and systematically to make the most of the dialectics which the contradictions of policy generate. Perhaps the key question is always, as Stuart Hall (1996) puts it, 'Are we thinking dialectically enough?'

In this respect, it is worth noting that this particular research project, which would never receive external funding in the current policy context, has been funded internally within our own institution as part of a strategy for improving its rating in the Research Assessment Exercise, thus enhancing its position in the higher education research market. In this sense, sustaining social purpose in adult and community education is both a problem that is the consequence of policy and a potential beneficiary of policy. It must be emphasised, however, that the same policy context has produced a field of practice that is increasingly casualised, divided between a few core/full-time staff and a disposable army of peripheral/part-time workers, dependent on the vagaries of short-term funding, colonised by aggressive further education colleges, and subjected endlessly to the regulation of the 'new managerialism' — regardless of whether this particular Emperor actually has any clothes on (Kavanagh, Rittman and Smith 1996).

This is a context in which it is all too easy for adult and community educators to lose any sense of social purpose in their engagement with the world and, with their noses kept so close to the grindstone, to forget that the apparent neutrality of the dominant discourse of instrumental rationality disguises the reality of its highly politicised nature, intentions and effects (for example, see Alexander and Martin 1995; Shaw and Crowther 1995).

Reasserting the significance of social purpose

Social purpose adult education is not only out of fashion, it is also fundamentally out of joint with the times (new or otherwise):

> ... a decade and a half of New Right individualism has undermined much of the previous purpose of British adult education — its commitment to active citizenship, public service, class emancipation, democratic participation, social justice, equal opportunities, and self fulfilment. This ... has switched the emphasis of adult education from the collective good to individual needs satisfaction, and from social justice to economic competitiveness. In the process it has largely lost its notion of learning for citizenship.(Benn and Fieldhouse 1995)

For the purposes of this research, we have characterised the general commitment to social purpose in the work of adult and community educators as incorporating the following elements:

- a recognition of adult education's role in contributing to the development of *a just social order* — rather than as a means primarily of personal development and individual betterment;
- a concern to develop *critical analysis* which confronts issues of power and seeks to connect local and specific struggles to the wider social, economic and political context;
- an acknowledgement that *educational practice* — and, in particular, the role of the worker — must be consciously and systematically *located within current policy developments*.

It should be emphasised that our interest is in adult education as a political (and consequently, in our view, a moral) project. In this respect, we are deeply suspicious of the present tendency to reduce adult education to adult learning. This seems to suggest that there is no room for our commitment, *as actors*, to a collective social purpose; rather, we should simply make ourselves available to resource and support individualised forms of personal and professional development. There is not necessarily anything wrong with this, but it is not what social purpose is about. Given the current context of policy and the politics of research that it promotes, it is all the more important and urgent to reassert the relevance of this particular tradition and position. It can help us to re-historicise our struggles and to re-establish some of the critical continuities which many postmodern accounts tend to ignore or obscure. What history shows us is that there is never no alternative. We forget at our peril what Keith Jackson reminded us of in his Foreword to *Adult education for a change*: the 'theoretical debate (about the politics of adult education) must be historical. Not producing histories of adult education but locating adult education in history' (Thompson 1980).

Our research involves interviewing 30 workers (about half of whom had been interviewed at the time of writing) who have been selected because they are committed to social purpose work. All of them work in what would commonly be labelled 'disadvantaged' communities, although we would prefer the term *excluded* — communities whose voice has been almost completely silenced in current policy and politics. The sample has been constructed to reflect balance in terms of gender, length of service, and work contexts, sectors and settings. The latter include generic community education work, community-based adult education, women's education, workers' education, trade union education, youth work, anti-racist work, community development and various kinds of 'partnership' initiatives, community schooling, educational guidance and Access, mental health work, educational responses to care in the community, action on disability, and educational administration and management.

An intensive two-hour interview, based on a standardised schedule, is conducted with each respondent. This is taped and subsequently transcribed. The interview schedule is structured under the following general heads: general classification data; biography; employment history; conceptualisation and operationalisation of social purpose education; analysis of policy/political context; personal career prospects/plans; role of higher education.

Workers express the idea of social purpose in a variety of ways:

- understanding and engaging with the context:

> the best forms of adult education should always involve some element of increasing people's awareness and understanding of the social, economic and political context ... — I see adult education as building up people's skills and confidence to actually do things about things.

- linking the individual and the collective, the personal and the political:

> Developing a critical analysis is one of the most important parts of personal development ... It's about developing the potential of the individual as part of a social collective.

- making the (often difficult) connections — and distinctions — between popular struggles:

> Traditional definitions of socialism don't take sufficient account of women's, black people's and environmental struggles. It would have to encompass all of these for me.

- striving for new forms of solidarity which address the politics of identity and difference:

> I believe in egalitarianism in the sense that no human being is better than another and we're all equal in this way, but that doesn't mean we're all the same, which is how it's sometimes interpreted. We're different, and difference is a positive thing.

- thinking dialectically and working dialectically in the present conjuncture:

> I think that social purpose education has never been more necessary than it is now, even though there will be even more of a struggle as the contradictions become clearer ... Cracks will appear. The more the struggle gets worse, the more the opportunities there are.

These responses suggest that we need to reconstruct what social purpose means in the current context. This must encompass both a recognition of the abiding centrality of class in the socio-economic structure of late modernity combined with a clearer understanding of how class position is mediated by the politics of identity and difference, always taking into account how 'the emphasis on difference can too easily assume an equivalence which ignores extant power relations' (Westwood 1991; see also Squires 1993, Segal 1991). Part of the difficulty of reasserting social purpose in the current context is that category politics can get in the way of developing an adequate analysis and synthesis, thus impeding the possibility of effective collective action. The result can be a pervasive loss of confidence and a vacuum of leadership:

> ... people have lost a lot of the rules about social order. No one is creating the rules or the codes or the ideas about how we should order our social relationships.

This is exacerbated, particularly in Scotland, by a widely felt sense of a 'democratic deficit' in the formal politics of the state — one of the consequences of which Ralph Miliband (1994) calls the 'hegemony of resignation'. A vital task of social purpose education in this context must be to encourage and enable people to rediscover their own sense of agency by

> engaging them as consciously as possible in the idea that they're capable of creating a social order ... and to reveal their potential contribution to that.

Our fieldwork to date indicates that any attempt to reconstruct social purpose in the adult education curriculum must include the following: taking the side of the exploited and oppressed (and understanding the distinction between them); developing inclusive definitions of equality; linking the personal with the political; reconstructing notions of solidarity in ways that are enriched by the realities of diversity and difference; relocating the individual within the social; systematically critiquing what *is* in order to clarify what *might be*; infusing all this with a global/international perspective. This is both a theoretical and a practical task in which workers need the support and commitment of the academic community.

Meanwhile, operationalising social purpose values in local educational work is a real struggle:

- as soon as people start talking about cuts, the equal opportunities agenda goes out the window ...
- There is a push to charge money for everything - to make money out of adult education.
- It's an educational culture talking to a managerial culture which is entirely alien to it.
- The bureaucracy gets worse by the day, and this is all in the interests of 'quality assurance'.
- ... 25 projects being centralised into seven ...

For some workers, at present there seems to be just too much pressure and too little scope to pursue social purpose in any systematic way. There is a general pessimism, but the hope must be that there are better times to come — for example, a change of government, a Scottish Assembly, or closer integration into the European Community. Others, however, manage to exploit their relative autonomy and think dialectically enough to show that sometimes opportunities can be found within all the constraints. Indeed, the contradictions of the present context may even be used as a resource for social purpose education:

> If people realise that this education and training route that we're being pushed down may or may not get them a job, that it won't necessarily get them what's promised, this can be a trigger to their political thinking in other ways. So it's a case of using their contradictory experience as a resource.

Our research suggests that four particular aspects of the current context are generating new opportunities to sustain social purpose in adult education work: care in the community, which is producing new and challenging constituencies for education and social action; the restructuring of higher education, which could stimulate a more radical discourse of access; equal opportunities initiatives, which continue to present rich contradictions for dialectical engagement; cultural politics in Scottish communities, which offer real opportunities for 'border crossings' in purposeful community-based work. When our fieldwork has been completed we intend to develop a systematic argument for these as key sites for sustaining social purpose education in the current policy context.

The role of higher education

- I have to work quite hard at keeping my motivation up ... I keep going to conferences ... to get a quick fix.
- You need other people. If you're on your own, you have to keep on inspiring yourself, and that's hard.

It is clear from our research that higher education institutions have, potentially, a key role to play in sustaining social purpose work in adult and community education in what are, by any standard, lean and mean times. It is necessary to preface our account of this, however, by emphasising that the critical distance we need to do our jobs can be a liability as well as an asset. Our research has repeatedly forced us to recognise that, however beleaguered our own position, it hardly compares with the grim and grinding reality of work on the ground and the material conditions of the communities in which it takes place. It is all too easy for us to become simply out of touch with this. There is a real sense of desperation, often shading into despair, even among the most committed and effective workers. In making the following five points about the role of higher education, therefore, we are conscious of our relatively privileged position and the concomitant responsibility to justify it in our engagement with the field of practice.

First, we need to understand more clearly and exploit more systematically the dialectics of our own position as teachers and researchers. Of all the people committed to social purpose work, we probably still retain the greatest degree of autonomy. We have already referred to the fact that this research has received internal funding as part of an institutional attempt to climb the rungs of the Research Assessment Exercise ladder when it would have been unlikely to attract external funding. Consequently, although we do not like the divide and rule implications of the RAE, our experience suggests that it can provide opportunities for conducting 'subversive' projects that run counter to the general politics of research in the current context. In addition, we would argue that this context should be used to stimulate curriculum development in the courses we teach. Two examples of this: a) in one course we have made the theoretical challenge and the practical task of thinking and working dialectically in the contemporary policy context the substance of the curriculum, assessment being based on evidence of students' ability to identify contradictions arising in practice and to work within them to develop coherent and creative responses; b) a 'special needs' course has been reconceived in terms of inclusive education and is taught in conjunction with local activists in the emergent social movements around disability issues — social movements which, it should be noted, are partly the direct outcome of current policy development and provide a unique resource for curriculum development (as distinct from the object of professional intervention).

Second, we have found that, both for ourselves and for our respondents, the research process itself constitutes a significant critical and creative space for sustaining social purpose education. Respondents have repeatedly emphasised that simply having to address our questions has helped them to step back from the busywork of practice, reflect more systematically on it, and reconnect process with purpose. Many have also indicated that they would, as a consequence of their participation in the research, value the opportunity to meet other respondents, and we now intend to build this into the research design. In this respect, therefore, the process of actually conducting the research is making a small but significant contribution to the task of sustaining social purpose in the current context.

Third, several respondents have emphasised the value they have come to place on the stimulation and reinforcement they get from having students on fieldwork placements. It is clear that the latter can act more as critical colleagues and collaborators than mere apprentices. This, however, presupposes a curriculum which enables and expects students to have the confidence and competence to make an active and creative contribution to their placement experience — and an analysis to inform it. The wider implications of this may demand substantial changes in both the culture of higher education institutions and conventional notions of professional development.

Fourth, we must recognise our particular responsibility and opportunity as teachers and researchers to offer workers some of the support which they feel they need in the current context in order to sustain both their own critical development and their commitment to the social purpose project. As workers become increasingly isolated, insecure, over-managed and divided, whilst opportunities for professional development become scarcer and more restricted to narrow instrumental concerns, we need to find new ways of working creatively with them. In this respect, our research should be seen as part of a broader strategy of critical re-engagement. This includes offering low or no cost conferences and seminars, supporting local reading groups, encouraging practitioner research and publication, and developing the national and international dimensions of our work (for example, see Crowther, Martin and Shaw 1997).

Fifth, in working in communities, it is essential to avoid both a narrow parochialism and the competitive localism the policy context encourages. In the era of the global market place we have a responsibility to articulate the solidarities which social purpose education implies. As the globalisation of capital proceeds, we need to show how local struggles can be seen as part of the wider international struggle for justice and peace.

Conclusion

Perhaps the most important point to make is that both our argument and our evidence at this stage suggest that higher education has a key contribution to make in sustaining the tradition of social purpose in adult and community education. The research process itself constitutes a significant space for critical reflection, analysis, dialogue and action. Potentially, it has a proactive role in constructing an agenda for sustaining social purpose education in the current policy context and framing a set of alternative and oppositional understandings to inform praxis. In this sense, research can be developmental in a radical way, helping to reconstitute social purpose in these new and hard times by reconnecting us with the resources of hope which we all need to revive and reinvigorate our work. 'Crossing borders' and 'breaking boundaries' can either help us or hinder us in this task. It depends on what we mean — and what we mean to do.

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Africentricity: new context, new challenges, new futures

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There is an African proverb that says, '*Until the lions tell their own history, history will always glorify the hunters*'. The *lions* in this case symbolises people of African descent[1] who for centuries have struggled to reaffirm their history, culture and ultimately their own identity, out of the ashes of European and in particular British enslavement, colonialism and imperialism. The *hunters* are the European imperial and colonial powers, of which Britain was a leading member, who set out to plunder the rich mineral resources and raw materials of Africa (Rodney 1988); who were responsible for the genocide of African people during the enslavement period (Davidson 1991; Walvin 1982; Williams 1983); and who carried out a systematic destruction of African languages, cultures, religions, and institutions. The experiences of people of African descent shows that each encounter with Europeans has been marked by exploitation, destruction or division, and domination (Baldwin, 1980, 1985; Baldwin and Hopkins 1990; Bell 1990; Burgest 1981, 1982; Caruthers 1972; Dixon 1976; Schiele 1991,1994; Wesling 1991; Wright 1984). This proverb urges us all, and in particular urges people of African descent, to seek answers to this critical question, who defines your knowledge and history and whose knowledge and history do you know? Over four hundred years, western scholars have knowingly or unknowingly chosen to describe Africa as a continent with little history and a continent that has not made little contribution to world culture, history and civilisation. This is despite the fact that the African oral historians, numerous archives, books by travellers, recent archaeological findings, and several modern scientific papers acknowledge that Australopithecus, a fossil man found in East Africa and South Africa was a weapon user and that Africa was the birth place of human civilisation. The great civilisations of Kush, Kemet, Nok, Axum, Nubia, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe; the great kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, Songhay, Kanen-Bornu, and Hausa; and the great contributions of African pharaohs in Kemet[2], all brought new knowledge in various areas such as, mathematics, mechanics, art, philosophy, politics, commerce, law, art, medicine and religion.

The term Africentricity[3] is derived from two words, *Africa* and *centred*. Africentricity advocates that people of African descent need to centre their world view on their rich and varied histories and cultures. Whilst Africa forms a vital source of the historical beginnings, cultures, belief systems, philosophies, family values and knowledge of people of African descent, the term African goes beyond the geographical boundaries of the African continent, to encompass the histories, cultures and all the people of African descent scattered outside Africa in the Diaspora. It was Cheik Anta Diop (1971), the founding father of Africentricity, who saw the cultures of people of African descent 'as emanating from one river but with numerous tributaries, characterised by their specific responses to history and the environment'. The last twenty years have seen a growing world-wide Africentric movement, scholarship, and discourse emanating mainly from the USA. Its leading advocates include eminent scholars like, Cheik Anta Diop, WE B DuBois, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o, Jacob Curuthers, John Henry Clarke, Maluana Karenga, Theophile Obenga, Dona Marimba Richards, Marimba Ani, Aisha Blackshire-Belay, N. Akbar, and Molefi Kete Asante. The foundations of Africentricity were laid down in Cheikh Anta Diop's book, *African Origin of Civilisation* (1971), where he used historical, linguistic and anthropological data to highlight the critical and significant role played by Africans in world history. It was a critique of the dominant western interpretation of knowledge and world history and the place accorded to Africans in that western interpretation of knowledge and world history. Today, Africentricity has developed to be the most critical theoretical and conceptual tool, concerned with making people of African descent central and subjects of human knowledge rather than objects on the periphery and margins of world history (Abbary 1990; Akbar 1997, 1984; Asante 1988, 1990; Baldwin 1980; Baldwin and Hopkins 1990; Bell, Bouie and Baldwin 1990; Boykin 1983; Carruthers 1981, 1989). It 'posits that African people or people of African descent are active, primary and central agents in the making of their history' (Asante 1990).

Africentricity has developed an African centred world view, a world view which has grown out of a shared cultural and historical experiences of people of African descent, which are (i) the centrality of community and co-operative living; (ii) acknowledge-ment and respect for African traditions and cultures; (iii) a high level of spirituality and ethical concerns; (iv) harmonious co-existence with nature; (v) the emphasis on education and learning to liberate oneself, to challenge social inequality, and to humanise the world; (vi) and lastly, the deep respect for one's elders and the veneration of one's ancestors. Africentricity has a distinct set of cosmological, ontological, epistemological and axiological attributes. In Africentric world view all elements of the universe, such as people, animals and inanimate subjects, are viewed as interconnected (Baldwin and Hopkins 1990; Bell 1990; Mbiti 1970; Nobles 1980). There is no separation between the spiritual and material (Asante 1980) and reality is viewed as being both spiritual and material at once (Meyers 1985). Ontologically, Africentricity assumes that all elements of the universe, including people, are spiritual (Akbar 1984; Mbiti 1970; Nobles 1980). Indeed, for elements to be considered interdependent there must be a universal link, and that link is the non-material spirit of the creator (Akbar 1984; Mbiti 1970; Nobles 1980; Zahan 1979). Spirituality is seen as essential to human beings, and there is belief in the supreme being and to the high value placed on morality. Epistemologically, the Africentric perspective places considerable emphasis on an affective way of obtaining knowledge (Akbar 1984; Asante 1988; Dixon, 1976; Nichols 1987; Schiele 1990). The maintenance and enhancement of harmonious interpersonal relationships is considered the most important cultural value in Africentricity (Dixon 1976; Hale-Benson 1982; Nichols 1987; Schiele 1990). The focus fosters a human-centred perspective toward life rather than an object or material perspective in which the value in maintaining and strengthening interpersonal bonds overrides the concern over acquiring material objects and accumulation of wealth. Africentricists are after the Ma'at, which is the pursuit of harmony, truth, justice and balance in one's attitude, thoughts, words and deeds. Africentricity offers a more holistic conception of human beings, it views people from a collective and spiritual perspectives, whilst recognising individual uniqueness (Akbar 1984; Boykin 1983; Boykin and Toms 1985) because the individual cannot be understood separate from other people and the historical and cultural space and centre they hold.

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[1] The term people of African descent is an inclusive term which refers to Africans in the continent and those scattered through out the world in the Diaspora. In this paper the terms Black and African-Caribbean will be used interchangeably to refer to people of African descent

[2] The term Kemet is the African name for Egypt, emphasising the need to use African names rather than names suitable to use in the West.

[3] The term Africentricity is preferred to Afrocentricity. It is acknowledged that the early and some recent Africentrists prefer to use the term Afrocentricity.

In the USA Africentricity has flourished and is well established in schools, community centres, some church organisations, most colleges and universities, whereas in the UK its progress has been very slow and patchy. The major barrier to its growth in the UK has been that, unlike the USA which has a well established African-American population that is over 100 years old, in the UK the African-Caribbean population is a relatively young one, the majority of whom arrived in the UK in the early 1940s to the early 1960s. During this 'settling-in-period' the African-Caribbean population devoted most of its time and energy to trying to obtain decent jobs, buying houses, and saving money; fighting to establish anti-racist social policies and anti-racist work practices; ensuring that their children obtained good educations, and supporting relatives and families left back in Africa or the Caribbean. There was little time left to do other things. The African-American population is over 40 million strong, whereas according to the 1991 Population Census the African Caribbean population in the UK is still small — less than one million (HMSO 1991). There is therefore no critical mass of people within the Black communities or Black students in further and higher education institutions to sustain specific programmes aimed at students of African descent. Also in the UK there has not been a great mass political movement such as the Civil Rights Movement or the Black Power Movement that was able to mobilise the disenfranchised and disaffected masses and raise issues of concern to the African-Caribbean community. It should also be remembered that Britain was at the forefront of European enslavement, imperialism and colonialism in Africa, and to justify its exploitation it had to provide its population, through the mass media and through education, with a distorted, inaccurate, and negative view of Africa, of Africans and by inference of all people of African descent. Inevitably this has been internalised by the majority of the British population, including members of the African Caribbean population. One cannot discount the influence of the general rise of racism in Europe and the UK; the effect of multiculturalist and integrationist social policies and practices; the relatively young history of radical Black writing; the low-intensity infighting between people of African descent from different Caribbean islands and between those from the Caribbean islands and those from the African continent. This made it difficult for Africentric ideas to develop and to flourish. In education, the Thacherite years of the 1980s saw drastic changes in the funding arrangements of further and higher education institutions, which saw the marginalisation of equal opportunities policies and practice; drastic cuts in Section 11 funding, which resulted in the loss of jobs for many Black staff; the flight of white liberals away from multicultural and anti-racist practices and equal opportunities issues, to income generating education programmes; the reduction of local education authorities' powers and funding from central government, which resulted in the closure of many positive action education programmes aimed at meeting the educational needs of the African-

Caribbean community. It is a combination of these factors that acted as a barrier to the development of an Africentric perspectives in the UK.

Despite these barriers, there has been a steady growth and development of Africentric ideas in the UK, although this has been slow and patchy. Where it exists, it first took place amongst a number of Black community and political groups that sprung up in the 1960s and 1970s; amongst radical students in further and higher education; and amongst radical Black intellectuals, writers and practitioners in various professions. The early influences in the UK came from the writing and work of Marcus Mosiah Garvey (Hill 1987) who laid the foundation for the specific African-Caribbean Africentric perspective. The growth and influence of the Rastafarian movement (Campbell 1985) and Reggae music was also very significant in raising the consciousness of many people of African descent in Africa and the Diaspora. From the USA the activities and experiences of African-Americans during the period of the Civil Rights Movement and the Black Power Movement were very important. Speeches by leaders like Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Bobby Searle, Eldridge Cleaver, Stokeley Carmichael, etc, made a great impact on Black people in the UK. In Africa the process of decolonisation which began in the 1950s; the writings of Kwame Nkrumah, Julius Nyerere, Amalcar Cabral, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Wole Soyinka, Steve Biko and others; and the gains made by African states towards 'political independence' gave inspiration to Africentricists in Britain. The success of the armed liberation movements; and the important role that the international community played in the liberation of South Africa, and the critical role played by South African students in boycotting segregated schools, challenging the curriculum and demanding the use of African languages, gave students immense encouragement to begin to question what they were also learning within the British education system. The increasing body of knowledge from Black writers from the USA, the Caribbean and Africa was beginning to reach the UK Black bookshops and that writing enabled Black students and academics to question why these texts which talked of the experiences of African-Caribbean people in the UK were not included in mainstream education. This was fuelled by a growing a body of research showing that African-Caribbean students were underachieving in the formal education system (Coard 1971; Rampton 1981; Scarman 1982; Swann 1985; Eggleston 1986). These reports came soon after the 'uprising' of Black youth in many British cities in 1981, which later led the government to allocate funding for the Black communities. This saw the establishment and growth of community education programmes, the setting up of literacy campaigns, the introduction of positive action education programmes by local education authorities, the development and growth of Saturday schools; and the increase in the number of Black workers through Section 11 funding, etc. These developments provided the foundation from which radical Black intellectuals began to interrogate anti-racist policies and practices, the Eurocentric curriculum, and to question the Eurocentric interpretation of world history.

These ideas were later to be advanced by the development of the Black Access studies in further education, the Black Women's studies and the African-Caribbean studies in higher education in the early 1980s, which challenged the multicultural and anti-racist theories of the time, aimed to increase the number of Black students taking part in FE and HE, and encouraged Black students to begin to question 'the taken for granted' knowledge they learn in the education system. These programmes aimed: (i) to redress the negative education experience and underachievement of Black students and increase their participation in further and higher education, (ii) to raise the self esteem, aspirations and cultural identity of students of African-Caribbean descent, (iii) to provide Black students with a positive and supportive learning environment that aims to raise the level of their academic performance and achievement; (iv) to enable students of African descent, for the first time in the learning experience, to be taught by Black lecturers and to learn co-operatively with other Black students, (v) to enable Black students to de-construct Eurocentric curriculum and discourse and to question prevailing knowledge and paradigms using an African-centred world view that puts them at the centre of history and learning, and lastly (vi) to provide African-Caribbean students with a positive learning experience, to make them useful and responsible members of the Black community, and to empower them to make a difference. At post-graduate level the development of Africentric perspectives has been slow. To date there is only one African-centred research centre — at Reading University. Sheffield University has had a successful and well established African-centred research group which has interrogated Eurocentric research methods and acted as a support group for African Caribbean research students. Manchester Metropolitan University also runs a series of seminars by Africentricists in Britain. Africentricity is not only confined to specific disciplines, such as history, geography, religion, sociology and psychology, but it encompasses many other subject areas. Kariamu Welsh Asante (1993) has highlighted the African contribution to ballet, jazz and modern dance, asserting that the polyrhythmic, polycentric and holistic character of African dance is varied and yet distinct. There is a connection in these varied dances through epic, memory and oral tradition, even though these dances represent different languages, people, geographies and cultures. Africentricity seeks to develop a theoretical and analytical tool that centres African people as subjects and agents of their historical experiences. It seeks to emphasise that the centre of knowledge has moved away from Europe as other nations and cultures demand and assert their right to define themselves and their relationship to the world from their own centres. This can be seen in literature, where African and the Caribbean writers are claiming the right to name the world for themselves by writing in African languages (for example, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o,), and patois (for example, Michael Smith, Louise Bennett) to rediscover their lost history, challenge institutional racism and identify with other struggles taking place in the world. Ngungi Wa Thiong'o argues that the English departments in higher education must begin 'to introduce and emphasise the literatureness of literature in its many languages and not the Englishness of literature'. In this way, he argues, educational establishments will recognise that knowing oneself, one's culture, one's history and one's environment forms the first and essential step to understanding others and the world, and that there could never be only one centre from which to view the world but that different people, at different times, in different places in the world have their culture and environment as their centre.

Great progress has been made to question what is taken for granted in many professions in the UK, and the role of Africentricists in that progress needs to be acknowledged . However, Eurocentric ideas are so embedded in our day to day thoughts, knowledge and academic discourse that it has become almost common sense that when one talks of history, philosophy or literature, it is assumed that one is talking about European history, European philosophy or European literature. Europe assumes this unique position of being the source of meaning, the centre of thought, and as ontological reality to the rest of the world. The Africentric perspective has challenged this and in this process it has been helped by the availability of funded research, the development of radiocarbon dating tests, and the development of advanced techniques in archaeology which have produced varied and concrete evidence to show that Africa was the source of modern civilisation. This is surely the period where old prejudices need to give way to new understanding, to an understanding that the history of humankind is a single great river into which a myriad tributaries flow. Europe is no longer the centre of knowledge and history. In many of the writings of people of African descent there is concern to move 'the centre from its assumed location in the West to a multiplicity of spheres in all the cultures of the world' (Ngug'i Wa Thiong'o 1993). For Africentricists, Kemet is the centre of civilisation and is the source of most Greek knowledge; the mathematical formulas of Archimedes were taken from Kemetic sources 2000 years old; Thales, Plato and Euxodus spent thirteen years in Kemet; and Pythagoras spent twenty two years in Kemet in order to be initiated by the Kemet priests. It was the Africans in Kemet who were the first people to make steel, and to build the great pyramid of Khufu, to assemble two and a half million stones each one weighing two-and-half tons. It is time to reinstall 'Africa's peoples at the centre of the culture of the world' (Davidson 1994).

What is being argued here is that the histories and cultures of Africa and the Caribbean are important and integral parts of Europe and integral parts of British culture. The language and cultures of African and Caribbean people are not peripheral to mainstream knowledge. The journey of African-Caribbean students and researchers in British universities is fraught with difficulties. Most African-Caribbean students and researchers would confirm their experience of constantly being outsiders within, of being present and yet being invisible, of constantly having to fight other people's definitions of them, of feeling disconnected, alienated, marginalised and temporary. This situation cannot be allowed to continue in higher education institutions because it is not a positive learning experience that will encourage others to want to pursue education and learning. It is no wonder that most African-Caribbean students enter higher education institutions not only to study and to do research but also to take part in the struggle to dismantle the status quo and shift the base from which to view the world from its narrow base in Europe to a multiplicity of centres, reflected in the literature, arts, music, and culture of people of African descent. Current policies and epistemological issues underpinning adult continuing education need to be redefined and reshaped to take into account the ontological perspectives and pedagogical realities of students of African descent. For these students, Africentricity is an essential tool for survival and resistance; it offers connectedness, collective identity; it increases access and participation; it introduces alternative paradigms and discourses; it enables students to network and to develop support groups; and it is liberating and empowering. Whilst Eurocentricity puts emphasis on the individual and the detached learner, with emphasis on competitive learning which leads to alienation of students from tutors and students from students, the Africentric perspective encourages students to see themselves as belonging to a collective interdependent group, engaged in co-operative learning, that encourages feeling intellect rather than cognitive intellect. 'I think and I feel therefore I know' is the Africentric view of learning. Feeling the knowledge then becomes just as important as experiencing it cognitively. It asks of us to work and learn in a more participatory and collaborative way than we have done before, and not to create a world view in which the 'knower' is detached from the world rather than being implicated in it. It ultimately is asking us to see learning as embarking in a journey of self discovery and self recovery.

Britain is made of many cultures, languages, religions, customs, etc, and as we approach the next millennium we all need to acknowledge and recognise this as the most important challenge that we have. There is no going back. Africentricity is alive within the Black community groups, amongst Black practitioners and intellectuals, and amongst Black students and researchers. It is concerned with making people of African descent central and subjects of human knowledge rather than objects on the periphery and margins of world history. Higher education institutions need to adapt to this new situation, to absorb this new knowledge, and to acknowledge the multiplicity of centres that students and staff bring to higher education institutions. It is therefore not really a question of studying that which is removed from ourselves wherever we are located, but rather one of understanding all the voices coming from what is essentially a plurality of centres all over the world. Institutions of higher learning in the UK should reflect this multiplicity of knowledge, cultures, and languages in their policies and practices, in their recruitment of staff and students, in the range of courses they provide, and more importantly in what is taught and how that is taught. In this way we shall build a positive learning environment for all students based on mutual respect and understanding.

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Transformational learning and its link to ego and faith development in HIV-positive adults

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A recent study of young, HIV-positive adults delineated the meaning-making process central to transformational learning (Courtenay, Merriam, and Reeves in press). A key component of transformational learning is that it is also developmental; that is, adults experience significant change in the process, and at least implicitly, this change is generally considered to be positive. Mezirow (1991, 155), for example, asserts that 'a strong case can be made for calling perspective transformation the central process of adult development'.

The purpose of this study was to determine how the meaning-making process involved in confronting a life-threatening illness affects adult development. We defined development in terms of Erikson's eight stages of ego development and in terms of faith development. Conceptually, faith and ego development have been closely merged by Fowler (1981), and by Carni (1988) who assert that there is a natural connection between the two, especially in the face of a terminal illness.

Review of relevant literature

Two studies were found that examined aspects of Erikson's theory with HIV-positive individuals. Thomas (1994) hypothesised that terminally diagnosed homosexual men would be engaged in Erikson's final developmental stage of ego integrity versus despair. He found that healthy resolution of earlier tasks resulted in ego integrity, and that 'emotional and spiritual well-being were directly correlated with the experience of Ego Integrity or Despair' (abstract). In the second study, Marshall (1991) found that the subjects in his sample of 162 gay and heterosexual men with greater exposure to death measured significantly higher for generativity (on a Measures of Psychosocial Development instrument) and were associated with significantly greater resolution for Erikson's stage six (intimacy vs. isolation). All gay men measured as having significantly greater positive outcomes and greater resolution for Erikson's stages six, seven, and eight than the heterosexual men.

An investigation of the previous research on religious faith development and HIV-positive adults yielded two research projects that have direct implications for this study. Marshall (1991) examined spirituality, lifespan development, and HIV-positive status. He found that the prospect of death influences reflection about spiritual concerns and that the introduction of HIV into an individual's life results in examining the meaning of life and in higher incidences of altruism.

Backlund (1990) examined faith from a developmental perspective, employing Fowler's (1981) model of faith development as the theoretical framework. He interviewed 40 gay men who had been informed of their HIV-status for at least three months. Although Backlund's findings indicate that HIV-positive men appear to enter a faith stage transition more frequently than HIV-negative men, the results are less helpful in confirming that faith changes and in explaining the nature of faith development brought on by an HIV-positive diagnosis.

In summary, research on Erikson's adulthood stages is generally supportive of the timing and nature of the stages. What is less clear is how movement through these stages is affected when one knows that he or she is not likely to live into old age. Are earlier, unresolved issues revisited? Is there an accelerated movement through all the stages? Do people skip to the final stage? Do they work on multiple stages simultaneously? And, just as a life-threatening illness might facilitate ego development, might it also effect a transition in faith development, and if so, how?

Method

This study employed a qualitative design to examine how being diagnosed HIV-positive affects ego and faith development. A qualitative design was chosen for its ability to allow for participants to express their insights from their frames of reference regarding the psychosocial and faith issues of interest (Bogdan and Biklen 1992; Patton 1990).

Sample selection and data collection

A nonrandom, purposeful sample of HIV-positive adults was selected to be interviewed.

Volunteer participants were sought from four community-based organisations that serve the HIV/AIDS population in Atlanta, Georgia. Each participant was given $25; several donated this gift back to AIDS-related organisations.

The final sample consisted of eighteen adults, ten men and eight women ranging in age from 23 to 45 (one male, age 57, who erroneously slipped through the screening process was retained because of the rich insights he provided). All the women are heterosexual; nine of the men are homosexual. Excluding the 57-year old, the average age of the sample was 34.7 years. Eleven are Caucasian, six are African-American, and one is Hispanic. The amount of time since diagnosis ranged from eighteen months to thirteen years. Level of educational attainment spanned Grade 10 to Masters Degree. Nine of the participants were currently employed. Some of the participants were employed in agencies that provide services to HIV-positive individuals, and most of those who did not work in such agencies volunteered in an AIDS-related organisation in some capacity. Participants selected were also those who had a CD4 cell (T-cell) count of 500 or less. Participants were interviewed in late 1995 before protease inhibitors were widely available (none were using them).

Data analysis

Data were analysed inductively using the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987). As the interviews were conducted and transcribed, each member of the research team individually read, reread, and coded the transcripts for key points and possible themes.

Findings

Six major findings emerged in the data analysis. Each is identified and described in this section.

Identity revisited

For the participants in this study, a positive diagnosis of HIV triggers a rethinking of one's identity in terms of 'a feeling of being at home in one's body, a sense of *knowing where one is going*, and an inner assuredness of anticipated recognition from those who count' (Erikson 1968, 165). The renegotiation of one's identity included coming to terms with a body that was deteriorating as a result of contracting a virus through socially-stigmatised practices, figuring out 'where one is going' in terms of goals and commitments, and deciding whose approval 'counted'.

When asked to summarise how she is different today compared with who she was pre-diagnosis, Tracy sums up her transformation:

> I don't need nobody to validate me today. All my life I looked for people to take and put me up here and at the same time they would take me and put me down here. Today I don't give them that power. I don't give nobody the power to invalidate me because I know who I am.

Simultaneous appearance of adulthood stages

Being diagnosed HIV-positive not only raises the identity issue which, according to Erikson, is an adolescent task, the diagnosis appears to inaugurate the simultaneous consideration of all three adulthood stages. Regardless of age, participants grappled with issues characteristic of intimacy, generativity, and ego integrity.

Intimacy versus isolation

Being HIV-positive meant rethinking what was possible and/or realistic in terms of significant others in their lives. For those without a current partner, there is hope but not the compulsive need to find one. Jamie thinks about who he would want with him should he end up in a 'hospital bed fixing to take my last breath'. He says,

> Well, I've got everybody in the world that I want there, but there is still one person that I want there that I don't have yet, and that's a life partner. Would that make my death incomplete if I don't have that person? No, I don't think so ... But, I would like to have that person that I could have that other piece of intimacy with that I don't have with everybody else there.

Generativity versus stagnation

Even for the youngest participants, a diagnosis of HIV triggers a rethinking of what's important in life, what meaning life has for them, and how they want to spend the time they have left. Most were able to make sense of their situation by concluding that they were destined to make a contribution to the world, largely through being of service to others (Courtenay, Merriam, and Reeves in press).

> Scott left a Wall Street career and 'redesigned his life' to be 'devoted to ... service'. 'I feel', he says, 'like I've been given a special role to play in people's lives for them to come up against their prejudices and to be a teacher to those people'.

Ego integrity versus despair

There is much evidence in our data for these participants having dealt with, and achieved a favourable ratio of ego integrity. As Erikson (1963, 168) says, ego integrity is 'the acceptance of one's one and only life cycle ... that ... permitted of no substitutions'. One of the most eloquent expressions of ego integrity is Tracy's account of trying to explain to her son why she wouldn't change anything about her life: 'Listen to me', she says to her son,

everything that I have went through in my life has brought me to the place that I am in today.

> I said, the only thing you're looking at is me using drugs and me being HIV positive, I said, but part of that was part of my growing, part of my learning to live life, part of my healing within. If any of them pieces was missing out of that puzzle, then I wouldn't be where I'm at and I wouldn't be the person that I am.

Enabling the resolution of identity and integrity

In addition to there being a redefining of identity and the engagement of the three adulthood stages simultaneously, the data suggest that intimacy and generativity enable and support the resolution of the tasks of identity and ego integrity. It is through connection (intimacy) and service (generativity) that the study participants redefined themselves and their place in the world; and it is this redefinition with which they are at peace within themselves.

Pat has come to not only accept who she is and who she's been, she finds her past experiences to be major assets in connecting with and helping others:

> This is my life, and I got the experience of both the street life and the education life to be able to go in and help someone which a lot of people don't have. So, I had to take a look at that and realise that, no, I needed this experience, because if you never walked in my shoes, then you don't know what I've done. So, I can communicate and feel ... So, I can understand, I can work with someone more so, because you've been through it, you've been through those feelings, and I know how I got out of those feelings so I'm able to help someone.

Faith: from religiosity to spirituality

This finding refers to how the respondents viewed and practised religious faith before and after their diagnosis. The change in faith expressed by the young adults in this study incorporates a new perspective of faith, a sense of *ownership* of their new faith, and the involvement in new expressions of faith.

The meaning of faith is transformed

Almost every participant described a new faith that conforms with what they defined as 'spiritual' in contrast to 'religious'. For these individuals, religion was equated with such practices or beliefs as attending church, participating in what they now viewed as meaningless rituals, or adherence to a *classical* view of the church, defined by some respondents as a structured or ordered view of the church.

Having been a pastoral minister before his diagnosis, John readily admitted that religion had always been important to him; however, in his HIV-positive state, he acknowledged that 'I do have a lot of faith in spirituality, I have very little faith in the church'. His new counselling career offers him 'a much greater sense of integrity, a much greater sense of calling, a much greater sense of dedication, a much greater sense of doing true ministry'.

Ownership characterises the new faith

The new view of faith is more meaningful to the HIV-positive adults in this research because the faith they express now is one that they have formulated, as opposed to a non-reflective faith that they adopted from parents, ministers, or other individuals. The respondents who voiced this change of ownership of their faith noted how the HIV-positive diagnosis compelled them to reflect on their previous views of faith, to question the assumptions underlying it. Jamie attended a Baptist church from infancy and assumed the faith of his parents and minister as a child. He confessed that 'prior to realising that I was positive I kind of believed it because I was told to believe it'; but after his diagnosis, he 'believed it because I believed it'.

Traditional and unconventional practice supports the new faith

The expression or practice of their faith also changed for the young adults in this study. What the data indicate is a spectrum of faith practice ranging from attending church services and praying to meditation or communion with nature. Even though many of the respondents associated their previous view of faith with conventional church activities, some of them continued those activities or re-engaged in them after several years absence. However, their participation in those traditional activities was more real and meaningful to them now; it is obvious from their conversations that the respondents had also found churches that were sympathetic to their new conceptions of faith. Jeffrey admitted that he 'returned to the church' and '(I) have become very active'. Moreover, he reported that he had found forgiveness in his church and a faith that is 'more genuine, less fearful'.

Concepts of God: from authoritarian to empowering

This finding reflects how the object of religious faith, God, changed for the individuals in this study as a consequence of an HIV-positive diagnosis. In all instances the earlier images of God have a negative connotation. Prior to his diagnosis, Jamie viewed God as a 'bully', claiming that he remembered asking rhetorically in the past, 'Why create me if you are just going to turn around and send me to hell and make me miserable if I don't do what you want me to do'.

Once the young adults in this study learned that they were HIV-positive, their view of God was one with more appealing, positive characteristics. Leeza's remarks encapsulate the image of God as a friend: 'I'll get the Bible and I'll look at myself in the mirror as a way of talking to God, but He is not really there. And I'll just sit up there and just talk to Him and tell Him how I feel'.

Place of self: from me to us

A third aspect of faith that changed for the respondents in this study is the perception of how their concept of self expanded to include other people. Joe characterised his life before HIV as highly successful, especially his career. After his diagnosis, he realised his priorities had been focused on self.

His interpretation of how he expresses his new perspective of faith by helping others captures the experience of the majority of the respondents:

> To me true faith and belief in humanity is going out and doing something that's, well, for others. It doesn't have to be something - it could be something very small, on a very local level, just going to visit somebody who's on their death bed or going to bring food to somebody who can't get it themselves ... Truly, following those — the words that are in the Bible, a lot of people can

> sit there and quote them to you, 'love thy neighbour' and that kind of stuff, but they really don't practice that in their life. I decided I was gonna practice some of those things.

Discussion

This study has demonstrated that ego and faith development occur when adults engage in the process of a transformational learning experience precipitated by a life-threatening illness. Further, the findings related to ego development challenge Erikson's position that stages of ego development occur at a specified time in life. The interaction of the stages discovered in this study perhaps reflect the notion of existential identity formation that Erikson, Erikson, and Kivnick (1986) found in their study of octogenarians. There is a close fit between our findings and McAdams' (1994) theory of identity formation as a life narrative quest. 'Once identity emerges as a central issue in late adolescence', McAdams argues, 'it does not go away ... Adults fashion and refashion stories of the self, marking important personality change through the 30s, 40s, 50, and beyond' (307). He and others characterise 'the uniquely adult agenda of making an identity — that is, finding unity and purpose in life — as an evolving narrative quest' (306).

With respect to changes in faith, the results of this study are compatible with Fowler's (1981) theory of faith development. That our participants now owned their faith parallels Individuative-Reflective faith, the stage in Fowler's model where the expectations of others are abandoned and individual autonomy leads to the formation of one's own unique faith.

The emphasis on spiritual in contrast to religious faith described by individuals in this study reflects aspects of Conjunctive Faith, Stage 5, the next to last stage in Fowler's (1981) faith development model. For example, Fowler (1981, 186) contends that in this stage,

> truth is more multidimensional and organically interdependent than most theories or accounts of truth can grasp. Religiously, it knows that the symbols, stories, doctrines and liturgies offered by its own or other traditions are inevitably partial, limited to a particular people's experience of God and incomplete ... conjunctive faith, therefore, is ready for significant encounters with other traditions than its own ... Due to the complexity of Fowler's (1981) sixth and last stage of faith development, Universalising Faith, any connection between it and the movement from self to others that is evident in the young adults in this study is speculative. However, there is clear evidence in their stories of a decentering process that Fowler uses to describe universalising faith.

Questions can be raised as to the extent to which our findings are an artifact of this particular sample. That is, the fact that these adults are HIV-positive, rather than diagnosed with some other terminal illness, may be impacting the results. It would indeed be interesting to look at ego and faith development with terminally ill younger adults in general. Future studies might also investigate the underlying reason(s) that a transition is made from a religious to a spiritual faith orientation.

Are people with HIV-positive status, even those with heterosexual lifestyles, so rejected by conventional religion that they are driven to find a more supportive faith perspective that happens to be spiritual?

This study has contributed to our understanding of transformational learning and its relationship to ego and faith development. The participants in this study were compelled to revisit their basic assumptions about themselves, their relationship to others, and their faith. The questioning of and reflection about those assumptions in light of their condition caused them to revise their concepts of identity and facilitated faith development. This study has identified how a transformational learning experience, prompted by a life-threatening illness, impacts multiple aspects of adults' lives.

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Finding our lodestone again: democracy, the civil society and adult education

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The civil society debate is raging, but adult educators are not there. Civic education used to be at the heart of our field. But, at the very moment when education for democracy is most needed, we have allowed our focus to be narrowed to workforce development. This paper argues that adult education needs to push out its shrinking borders, join in the civil society debate, and reclaim civic education as our focus of attraction. But in order to do this, we need to re-examine what citizenship means in this changing world, and how adult education might best support and encourage it. As a starting point, the paper reports briefly on research on civic participation and citizenship conducted recently in two regions of the United States. The research paints a compelling picture of citizenship as a way of living-in-community.

> 'I guess I'll start off saying that I learned how to stand on my two feet from a school event. We had five children. During the time when they all started to school, we lived on a blacktopped road and the bus was coming through. And then we bought and built on a dirt road. This particular road had quite a few kids, walking from one end to the other out to the blacktop to catch the bus. So I decided that my husband and I would go and ask the superintendent if he could put a bus through there. This was a black community. He told me no, we didn't have enough kids [in the neighbourhood]. I asked how many does it take. I told him I had 40. He didn't believe me.
>
> 'So my husband and I got a list of the kids and I carried it back to the superintendent. Then he thought I had made up the names. I had to go back and get the addresses and their parents' names. I went door to door, walking, and asking the parents if they would go over there in a group. Some people were scared, they had never done this before, and they didn't want to do it. So I said, we've started and we're not going to stop. I got all the information and carried it back. I had to make seven trips. I had to convince him.
>
> 'Finally we got a bus — it was still a dirt road. When it was dry, the bus would come through, but when it rained, it didn't, I would have to walk out to the blacktop with coats and boots to meet the bus after school. That's when [the] JONAH [organisation] came through, and we went to fighting for a road, and we got a road.
>
> 'I have learned to stand up and fight for anything in the community and anywhere. Cause all you've got to do is ask. And if they say no, don't take no for an answer. Because they're going to say no — but keep going back. You'll get something done when they know that you're a person that sticks. (A citizen activist from west Tennessee, talking to the Civic Participation Project about acting as a citizen, Centre for Literacy Studies 1996).

Narrowing our focus

Adult education on both sides of the Atlantic has historically seen itself as part of the road toward a democratic society. In the United States, adult civic education dates back to the nineteenth century 'chatauquas' and Mechanics Institutes. In Britain, a similar tradition runs through the Workers Education Associations, Settlements, miners' libraries and similar institutions. While much of this adult education history has been primarily about civic 'talk', there has also been a strong tradition of educational involvement in citizen action.

However, public policy is re-casting adult education in a narrower mould. Paul Miller's review for *Adult Education Quarterly* of the mission of adult education concludes:

> This glance across two centuries suggests the long and inexorable shift that education has made, encouraged and demanded by constituents and funders alike, from education for citizenship toward preparing people for occupational success. (Miller 1995, 46).

In the United States and most industrialised countries, the main concern of adult education in the last few years has been the global economy, economic competitiveness, and the production of skilled workers. There has been a secondary (and much smaller) focus on parents— as teachers of their children — and again, the main intent is for children to become successful in school, and in turn, in employment. In Britain these constraints have been perhaps especially apparent in the Further Education sector which has primary responsibility for adult literacy and basic skills, but also in Continuing Education within the Higher Education sector.

At the same time that adult education is accepting a narrower remit, there is evidence of new interest in issues of citizenship and the civil society. In the United States in particular, but also in Britain, the last few years have seen a lively debate outside the net of adult education, among social researchers and even politicians about the civic underpinnings of successful communities and societies.

Civil society, civic participation and social capital

'Civil society' is not about being polite to each other. The civil society is that sector of public life that is outside the political and economic spheres: 'the sphere of voluntary associations and informal networks in which individuals and groups engage in activities of public consequence.' (Friedland and Sirianni 1995, 15) It is how we live together in communities, and work together for the common good.

Civic associations are the heart of the civil society (though the term also includes informal networks, not just formal organisations). In Harry Boyte's words, these create an 'everyday scaffolding for politics'. (Boyte 1995, 14) In these associations, whether overtly 'political' or not, citizens learn the practical arts of public life — negotiation, accountability, exercise of authority, the granting of public recognition.

Social capital is what gets created when individuals participate in civic associations and informal networks. It is, as Robert Putnam says, the 'features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit'. (Putnam 1995, 67) Putnam's research in Italy (1993 and elsewhere) claims that social capital should take its place alongside physical (or economic) capital and human capital in successful — and sustainable — communities. Social capital, in fact, enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital, by making it easier to work together for the common good.

Putnam, and others, argue that civic engagement, or participation in the civil society, is in decline in America, and similar findings have been reported in the UK. People join less, trust less, vote less, go to church less, read newspapers less, volunteer less. (Putnam 1996) It can be argued that Putnam is measuring the wrong things — while some organisations, like the scouts, the League of Women Voters, PTAs, churches are in decline, others, like environmental groups, women's circles, community service groups and self-help health groups, are not declining but have experienced significant growth. Nevertheless, there is sufficient cause for concern.

In Europe, there are similar concerns about the decline in civic participation, although the language of debate is different. A rising spiral of unemployment and insecure employment, and accompanying economic stresses, is accompanied by an increase in 'social exclusion' — a term the European Union uses to identify a number of economic and social attributes which decrease civic, political and economic participation. Socially excluded populations include the long-term unemployed, disaffected youth, lone (single) parents, ethnic minorities and the disabled. In fact, if you add together all these excluded populations, there are probably not many included. Social exclusion is a reflection of the increasing polarisation of our societies into rich and poor, and into many different groups contending morality.

The role of adult education in a changing world

A review of the ways in which our world is fast changing suggests that a concentration on work as the sole lodestone for adult education is misplaced. It is true that our working lives have changed dramatically — from manufacturing to service, from stable 'skilled hands' to temporary and short-term employment, from the production line to the 'learning organisation.' These changes demand more than simply a retooling of workers' skills, they involve knowledge, networks, cultural mores and discourses.

Our political lives are also changing: with sound bites, fewer decisions being made by elected bodies, and the intrusion of the market into those decisions that are left. The state is no longer the arbiter of core culture and a national order. Increasingly cultural differences within nations are dividing people against each other, and we are witnessing a renewal of civil wars and even genocide in many parts of the world.

Our sense of community is changing, as we all engage in multiple and many-layered communities — of interest, of work, of where we live, of ethnicity, of sexual identity, and so on. These are in complex relationships with one another. And they are full of conflict and contradictions.

And our private lives are changing with the intrusion of both the market and government into what once were private spaces — the global commodity culture, the regulation of how we live, and television soap operas which have more reality than their neighbourhoods for many people.

If we accept that the health of democracy depends — in part, not completely — on the fashioning of democratic attitudes and habits among all members of society then we have to ask where these are learned and nurtured. Where are the 'schools' in which citizens learn what Bellah (1985) called democratic 'habits of the heart' — respect for others and self-respect, willingness to accept our own responsibility for the common good, willingness to welcome diversity and to approach others in openness?

This is where there may be a new — and old — role for adult education, a way to reclaim and reinvent our history. Yet what needs to be done, what civic education should look like, is not so clear as perhaps it once was. If we look at the Citizenship Schools of the US Civil Rights Movement, for example, it was clear that literacy was needed to bring about full participation in democracy. African-Americans needed to learn to read in order to pass the voting rights tests which existed in many Southern states. The Citizenship Schools, started by the Highlander

Centre, took on that challenge, using community members as teachers, everyday texts (Sears and Roebuck catalogues, the bible, hymns and spirituals) as curriculum, and community centres as schools. Over a decade, thousands of southern blacks took part in the Citizenship Schools and gained, and exercised, their right to vote.

It is not so clear today, in the world of the global economy. What does it mean to be a citizen in this changing world? What do today's 'good citizens' do? And how should adult education think about its mission to contribute to a more democratic society? Adult educators have got used to thinking about human capital, and the role education plays in building it. We haven't thought nearly as much about social capital, and the role of education in building it. Nor have we looked closely at the complexities of civic life, and what knowledge and skills are now needed to participate fully — or even what to participate means.

What is politics for? Is it talk? Is it social action? Is it electing the right people to office? Harry Boyte, long-time community activist and political scientist, sees politics as public work — 'citizenship as effective, skilled, public-spirited work in solving our common problems' (Boyte 1995, 1). This view does not gloss over questions of unequal power, or conflicting values, as does deliberative democracy. Nor does it assign to the state the sole power to right wrongs. Instead, citizenship as public work focuses on the creation of public values through ongoing efforts of people with different interests and views to address common concerns (Boyte 1997).

Civic participation project

One of the ways to get clearer about what it means to be an active citizen today is to ask people. In a study in the US in which I was involved over the last couple of years, we did just that: we asked active citizens what citizenship means to them, what civic participation is all about, what a good citizen is, and how citizens learn to do what they do. This project was part of the National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) Equipped for the Future initiative, developing a new vision for adult literacy education in the United States. (Stein 1995 and 1997) It started where such national projects hardly ever start — with learners. In the project's first phase, NIFL invited adult learners to write about what Goal 6 of the national education goals means to them, the goal that states:

> By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Around 1500 adult learners from adult basic education and literacy programmes in 34 States responded to the invitation. They spoke eloquently of seeing the world changing, of the responsibilities they feel as parents, as workers, and as citizens, and of their purposes for learning. They said they want to learn in order:

- to have access to information and orient themselves in the world;
- to give voice to their ideas and opinions and to have the confidence that their voice will be heard and taken into account;
- to solve problems and make decisions on their own, acting independently as a parent, citizen and worker, for the good of their families, their community, and their nation;
- to be able to keep on learning in order to keep up with a rapidly changing world. (Stein 1995, 4)

The second phase of Equipped for the Future focused on the major roles which adults play, as workers, family members, and as citizens. Our Civic Participation Project carried out research on the citizen role in two regions — Southern Appalachia, and New England. We convened focus groups and inquiry projects to explore what citizenship means to people, how active citizens practice — and learn — civic participation, and the skills and knowledge needed to participate actively in civic life.

In the course of the year-long project, we heard from experienced citizens: grassroots community activists, local and state civic and political leaders, teachers, programme directors and policy-makers in the field of adult literacy education, and from adult learners. They included women and men of all ages from a variety of ethnic and class backgrounds, including immigrants to the US from all over the world.

Citizenship as action to make a difference

Analysing the rich data from these discussions, it is clear that the heart of good citizenship is action. People told us that being a citizen is not a passive status, it is active involvement in the community, however community is constituted. A citizen tries to make a difference. In Appalachia, an experienced community activist said,

> Bridge to the future ... one of the ways I interpret that, each one of us is working to try to make this world a better place, and that's really a key to being a good citizen.

In New England, a politician said,

> This is their government, they can make a difference, and have a right to get involved.

One person in Tennessee said,

> If you just sit back and do nothing, I don't think you're a good citizen.

When asked to think of a time when they had been acting as a citizen, people in the Appalachian and New England focus groups and inquiry projects gave a wide range of examples — taking food to an elderly or sick neighbour, getting involved in neighbourhood watches, teaching children to pick up litter and keep the neighbourhood clean, volunteering in schools. People spoke about contacting politicians to advocate more funding for adult education programmes, to get roads built, or roads stopped, to support or to change pieces of legislation or state/national policy. They told about organising to stop toxic waste dumps, for more considerate procedures in social services offices, to persuade police to crack down on drug dealing. Their participation in the political arena went far beyond voting.

Citizen participation seems to have two major dimensions: that of impact, from personal to societal; and that of agency, from individuals acting on their own to groups and organisations acting together (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Institutional or social change

-voting
- writing letters to editor
- calling elected representatives

- organising for clean water
- investigating food stamps
- stopping toxic waste

Individual action

Group action

- volunteering in school
- taking food to a neighbour
- clearing snow from shared areas

- planting flowers
- volunteering with 4H Club
- working with teens to help seniors

Personal impact

Civic participation, then, encompasses many kinds of action, which in turn require a variety of skills and knowledge. Each individual citizen does not necessarily carry out actions in all four areas of the quadrant. But a community with active civic participation will have activities of many kinds going on. In order to act effectively, citizens need to become proficient in other areas: to be informed, to have a voice, and to work together:

- To be informed includes the ability to pose questions and identify problems, to find information from a variety of sources — libraries and written documents of course, but also oral sources, like going to meetings. People told us you have to learn to 'read between the lines', to understand the realities of how political decisions are made, not just the theory, to know who your allies are and how to influence people.
- To have a voice includes both being willing to speak out, but also to have something to say, so it builds on being informed. To have a voice means developing your sense of self, as well as speaking so that others can hear and understand you.
- To work together includes getting involved with others in formal and informal ways, and learning to participate in groups, dealing with difference and conflict.

Building a new vision for adult education

How can adult education support and encourage this vision of citizenship and civic participation? Most learning about civic participation takes place outside of educational settings: people learn by doing, and especially learn through the opportunities provided by taking part in community organisations (well documented in British research by Elsdon *et al.* 1995). What our role as adult educators should be, and how we should get to play it, needs more work and more people's thinking. In fact, we need as a field to practice Harry Boyte's concept of politics as 'public work' — problem solving around common concerns (Boyte 1997).

It is clear to all of us, I think, that some people feel excluded from full participation, especially in the political arena, by various factors, including their sense that they do not know enough and that they will not be heard. Adult education has an important role to play in promoting civic participation and supporting the involvement of people who have felt excluded. Adult education can help people with the practical skills and knowledge of citizenship, which will help them be informed, form a thoughtful opinion on important issues, use their voice to speak out, work together with others, and take action.

There are many ways we might start working on some of these ideas, even within a national and international framework which does not explicitly support education for citizenship. We can create safe spaces in our classrooms for people to practice the civic arts, and gain the confidence and skills to be more active outside. We can create more networks and connections between our classrooms and the broader community, and build our own and our students' social capital. Our programs can become a place to construct together and to live out a vision of what society might become, a better world.

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Boundaries and quality : towards a national qualification framework for education, training and development practitioners in South Africa[1]

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Given the enormous task of post-apartheid educational reconstruction — the transformation of institutions whose primary classification principle has been race — the attraction of a National Qualifications Framework is understandable. An NQF immediately offers a new, inclusive outcomes-focused, assessment-led reordering system — and reordering authority — something to place above and beyond the mundane system — unjust and inefficient — of old institutionalised practices. And such a reordering system is driven into a radically inclusive mode by the scope and urgency of the reconstructive agenda. (Human Sciences Research Council 1996; Ministry of Education 1996). It is understandable, too, that the NQF concept has been imported into reconstructive policy with an enthusiasm and innocence that has drawn constructive concern from contexts of experience (Young 1996).

Several NQF-referenced pilot projects are under way, and it is one of these — the Education, Training and Development Practices Project (ETDP Project) — that is the focus of this paper. The sector of responsibility of the ETDP Project is defined unequivocally in aspirational mode — ETDP practices across the board not only of education and training but of non-formal development work as well. The Project is charged with the following brief:

> to produce a negotiated model in terms of pathways, sets of unit standards and qualifications, accepted by the target groups, for developing quality ETDP practices, particularly within the National Qualifications Framework.
>
> (National Training Board/ETD Practices Project 1997).

Its primary objective, then, is to devise 'a model for quality practices'; its secondary objective is to assist the development of the NQF itself.

I shall not be concerned here with an account of the work of the Project to date. This has proceeded through two stages — a survey of the field (or fields) of ETD practices and the design of a development model (or two competing models as it turned out). These stages are fully documented (National Training Board/ETD Practices Project 1996, 1997). The task instead will be to examine — with the Project providing the case — the relationship between an inherited and fragmented field of practice — an old institutional field — and a new regulative system in the development of quality practices.

Current sites of education, training and development practice in South Africa

A map of the broad field of ETD practices in South Africa includes the three sites of practice reflected in the ETD acronym — education, training and development — seeing their traditional locations as formal education, public and private sector training, and social development work of the broadest kind (Figure 1).

The 'specialised ETD institutions' category includes primary schools, secondary schools, technikons and universities — classic forms of formal education — as well as specialised institutions developed by the private sector in particular. The 'public and private sector organisations' category includes all within-house education and training at whatever level directed at occupational effectiveness. The 'civil society' sector includes such fundamental sites of knowledge transmission and acquisition as families, churches, cultural and sporting associations and political parties. The area linking the three sites — that of 'formalising institutions' — depicts one ongoing dynamic in the organisation and recognition of ETD practices in complex societies — the process of formalising hitherto non-formal or informal knowledge transmission. This sector includes such emerging sub-systems of education as adult basic education and training (ABET) and early childhood development (ECD), and further education and training (FET). The NQF framework is itself a new formalising mechanism, drawing the traditional sites of practice into new relationships through an inclusive qualifications grid.

The placing of 'global information society' on this map serves to indicate that the three sectors, and indeed the divisions within each sectors, strongly demarcated as they are, do not have impermeable boundaries. The most important agent of permeation is information — and this by increasingly powerful information technology, globally referenced. Until very recently institutional boundaries were able to operate as informational boundaries; this is no longer the case. We note, too,

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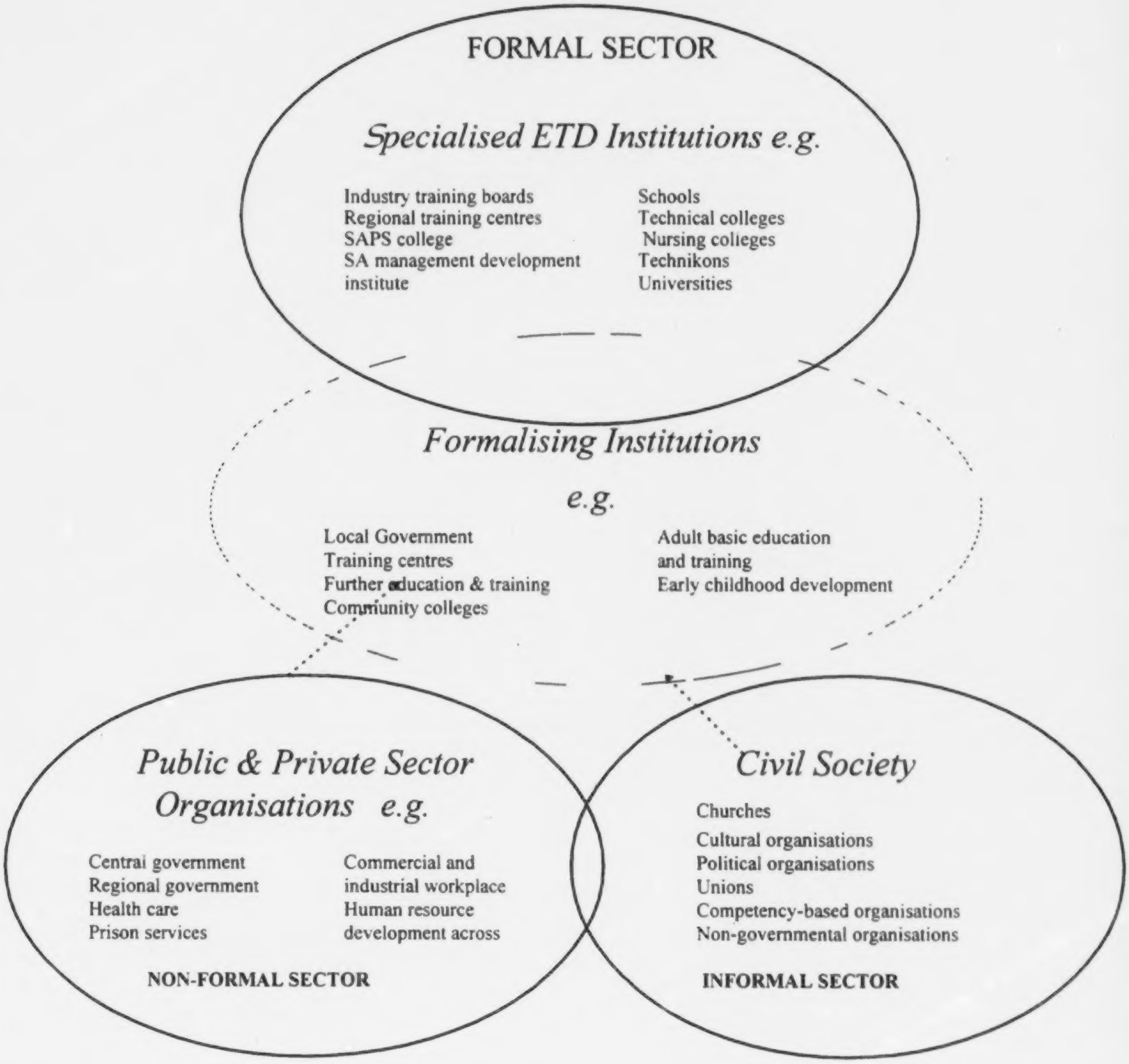
[1] This paper draws on and acknowledges its indebtedness to the collective work of the Education, Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Project of the South African National Training Board and in particular to that of Jeanne Gamble and Daryl McLean.

Figure 1

SITES OF ETD PRACTICE


FORMAL SECTOR
Specialised ETD Institutions e.g.
Industry training boards
Regional training centres
SAPS college
SA management development institute
Schools
Technical colleges
Nursing colleges
Technikons
Universities
Formalising Institutions e.g.
Local Government
Training centres
Further education & training
Community colleges
Adult basic education and training
Early childhood development
Public & Private Sector Organisations e.g.
Central government
Regional government
Health care
Prison services
Commercial and industrial workplace
Human resource development across
NON-FORMAL SECTOR
Civil Society
Churches
Cultural organisations
Political organisations
Unions
Competency-based organisations
Non-governmental organisations
INFORMAL SECTOR

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Global Information Society
(Global Qualifications Society)

(National Training Board/Education, Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Project, 1997) that a *national* qualification structure will find itself operating increasingly, through developing information systems, within a *global* qualifications market.

At present, however, ETD practices and practitioners in South Africa are conventionally located in broad sites that can be described as (formal) specialised and specialising educational systems, as non-formal work sites with ET functions, and as sites of informal civic and cultural association.

A second depiction of the field extends the description of cross-site differences by means of two matrices. The first is a table that attempts to compare ETD *practices* across the three broad sites (Table 1.1), while the second compares *practitioners* themselves while noting the different degrees to which an ETD practitioner role or identity is specialised across sites (Table 1.2). Across our broad fields are quite different ways of organising ETD practices (Table 1.2).

Table 1.1 ETD practices across sites

CATEGORY	FORMAL	NON-FORMAL	INFORMAL
Organising principle	knowledge hierarchy	occupational role	project goal
Boundary conditions	decontextualised	functional	embedded
Contractual conditions	pedagogic (student)	economic (worker)	associative (member)
Evaluation criteria	norm-referenced (acquisition)	criterion-referenced (application)	commitment-referenced (participation)
Evaluation mode	examination	performance	undifferentiated
Evaluation indicators	course-based	performance-based	participation-based

Table 1.2 ETD practitioners across sites

CATEGORY	FORMAL	NON-FORMAL	INFORMAL
Expertise-base	occupational pedagogic contextual	occupational contextual pedagogic	contextual occupational pedagogic
ETD practitioner role	primary	secondary	undifferentiated
Role integration (teaching/ design/ management)	range from high to low	low	high
Qualifications	formalised	formalising	informal
Occupational ladder	extended	restricted	absent
Career progression	bureaucratised	corporate	limited

The sub-sets of the specialised system take their identities from formalised fields of knowledge — science, maths, language, technology, etcetera — arranged in hierarchical relationships, from pre-school to technikons and universities. In the public and private sector organisations field, ETD is characterised by occupational areas — by the roles and tasks of the workplace. In the social space labelled 'civil society', the ubiquitous informal processes of knowledge transmission and acquisition are focused by forms of social intervention — welfarist or activist — on behalf of specific social groups — rural women or handicapped persons, for example — or specific projects — like agricultural development. Broadly then the ETD sub-fields constructed in each sector have different grounding principles — in formal knowledge systems, in occupational roles, and in what might be called 'fields of intervention'. In short-hand terms, we may say that the key organisational terms of each are knowledge hierarchy, occupational performance and project goals. Fundamental differences in the assumptions that frame practice can be seen, too, in boundary conditions, contractual conditions and conceptions of evaluation.

Differences persist at the level of practitioner identity (Table 1.2). These can be seen in expertise base, in role configuration and in career track.

Practitioner expertise base

Project researchers see three forms of expertise as underpinning practitioner performance:

- *occupational* expertise, which includes subject expertise in formal settings.
- *contextual* understanding, including a broad understanding of society, of macro-political, economic and social issues, and of sector or workplace contexts.
- expertise in ETD itself (or *pedagogic* expertise), including an understanding of broader ETD issues and learning processes, communicative competence and interpersonal and analytical skills.

(National Training Board/ETD Practices Project, 1997)

Such expertise bases achieve different prioritisations across the fields of practice. At advanced levels in the formal context, for example at technikons and universities, occupational expertise, in the form of academic and professional subjects, is the essential expertise base, followed by pedagogic expertise and, in third place, contextual expertise. Formal ETD is a decontextualised practice when contrasted with workplace skill transmission, for example.

In the private and public sector field a different order of priority operates. Again, as with higher education, occupational expertise — but here in the sense of occupational skill and experience in a technical or trades area — has priority. This is followed, however, by contextual expertise — knowledge of organisational culture, goals and practices, both tacit and explicit — and finally by pedagogic expertise. A striking feature of corporate HRD and OD is the dependence of ETD practitioners on materials, technologies and experts from outside the organisation — and the consequent restriction of their own range of professional capacities. Higher levels of pedagogic expertise remain imported commodities with their organisational relevance therefore always problematic.

In the informal sector the prioritisation varies again, with the highest value placed on contextual expertise.

Role configuration

Considerable work has been done by project researchers on the description of practitioner roles in different sites and institutions, taking as their starting point the following set of generic roles:

> Administrator, assessor, evaluator, group learning facilitator, individual learning facilitator, learning experience designer, learning materials developer, manager, needs analyst, strategist.

Research both extended this original role set and revealed different meanings and interrelationships of roles across different sites of practice. It also confirmed the recognition and acceptance of such basic role descriptions across sites. It appeared possible to use a generic set of roles to describe practices across the entire ETDP field, with the proviso that such descriptions were not to be taken to mean the same thing or role performances to be valued in the same way in different contexts.

A further finding across sites was the recognition that extensive lists of ETDP roles might be usefully reduced to a threefold classification — *teaching* roles, *design* roles and *management* roles (with 'teaching' used throughout as a broad term that encompasses training, instructing, lecturing, facilitating and demonstrating).

This simple typology will be used to consider practitioner roles and role clusters within and across each of our three broad sites of practice.

In the specialised formal sector role patterns vary greatly across institutional sites. At university level, for example, roles have traditionally been undifferentiated, with teaching, design, management and knowledge production through research and study — all expected of individual academics. But this position is changing under present social conditions.

Within the schooling sector we find, typically, though with striking exceptions, specialised management roles, specialised teaching roles and very limited design roles in operation. Curriculum development, syllabus design, textbook production and high level assessment systems are all external to the individual institution. Specialisation in design tasks — as well as high level management tasks — means movement into regional or national bureaucracy.

Within private sector organisations — as in the higher education sector — instructional roles have traditionally been closely integrated with occupational expertise. Technical skill and experience has been seen as foundational for an industrial trainer, for example, and instruction has involved the mediation of such skill and expertise mainly in non-formal mode. Current corporate and industrial training practices are in the process of transition from what was essentially a reproductive model of knowledge transmission to the construction of more open, innovative and participatory — still performance-referenced — learning systems. It is this transition that generates the expansion, formalisation and differentiation of practitioner roles in private and public sector organisations.

Within this present developmental process instructional roles have achieved particular forms of expression, with internationally referenced competency-based modular programmes co-existing with local and traditional instructional techniques. What seems crucial here is the extent of the separation of instructional and design roles across private and public sector organisations. Programme design is external and imported; instruction is internal. This practice restricts instructional roles to forms of transmission and adaptation. And it restricts design roles to abstract modelling, product selection and brokerage. In those cases where it has been possible to integrate these two key areas of practice within the organisation the quality of both has benefited greatly.

In the informal sector, ETDP roles remain largely unspecialised and undifferentiated. Interventive project work — especially in small community organisations or development projects — typically requires maximal role flexibility and integration.

Sites, boundaries and quality

Broad site and specific institutional location both construct and fragment the ETD field in South Africa. To put it in another way, ETD practices are at present 'locked into' a range of different institutions within which what is to count as appropriate or effective work is internally referenced, evaluated and accredited.

Across the broad sites typified above, very different practitioner discourses have achieved authority; and even within the institutional sub-sectors of such sites very different discourses operate in defining what counts as good practice. The terms E+T+D recognise these divisions in their crudest form and signal both the aspiration and the possibility of achieving some new model for their interconnection in the interests of recognising and developing quality practices.

Equally striking, though, is the message that across all these different sites of practice a very similar ETDP vocabulary operates when the nature of *role performance* is addressed. When practitioners across the board are asked to describe rather than evaluate what constitutes ETD performance they employ remarkably similar terms. Though discourses diverge, roles seem to have commonality.

Conclusion

The concluding section of the paper deals with two implications of this field description for the project of recognising and developing quality ETD practices.

The first is that quality cannot be derived from or premised upon role.

The second is that different sites of practice have different stakes in the development of a qualifications framework.

How are quality ETD practices to be modelled?

Quality cannot be derived from or premised upon role. Roles are enacted, given meaning, interrelated and valued as performances only within forms of practice that give them some coherent framework of aspiration. The fact that inherited forms of practice are seriously flawed does not alter the principle that roles may usefully transcend fields of practice as generic descriptors — they have a classificatory function — but do not generate (non-tautological) generic standards. There is therefore no direct route from roles to standards. Boundaries are simultaneously conditions for and restrictions upon the development of quality practice.

A national ETDP intervention model will therefore have to respect and use the essential tension between a common vocabulary of generic roles and a differentiated vocabulary of situated practice. Abstracting roles from sites will produce a formalism that changes nothing; locking roles within sites will perpetuate internal referencing systems that perpetuate the status quo. The form and process of interrelation is the critical task that an ETDP interventist model needs to address. The question is how new conceptual and technological systems can intersect creatively with old institutional systems in recognising what might count as 'quality practices'.

As a necessary conceptual move in addressing this question ETD researchers developed what they referred to as 'a quality framework', depicted in Figure 2. The point of the 'quality framework' model is that practitioner roles are enacted — and can be evaluated — within terms constructed by three interrelated forms of expertise — occupational, contextual and pedagogic.

The ETDP roles identified here are therefore placed within the triangle of demands constructed by these dimensions of expertise. It is this *interrelationship* that is seen as generic across the ETDP site, and may provide the frame for a single quality framework, not the roles deployed within it.

Practitioner boundaries and qualification frameworks

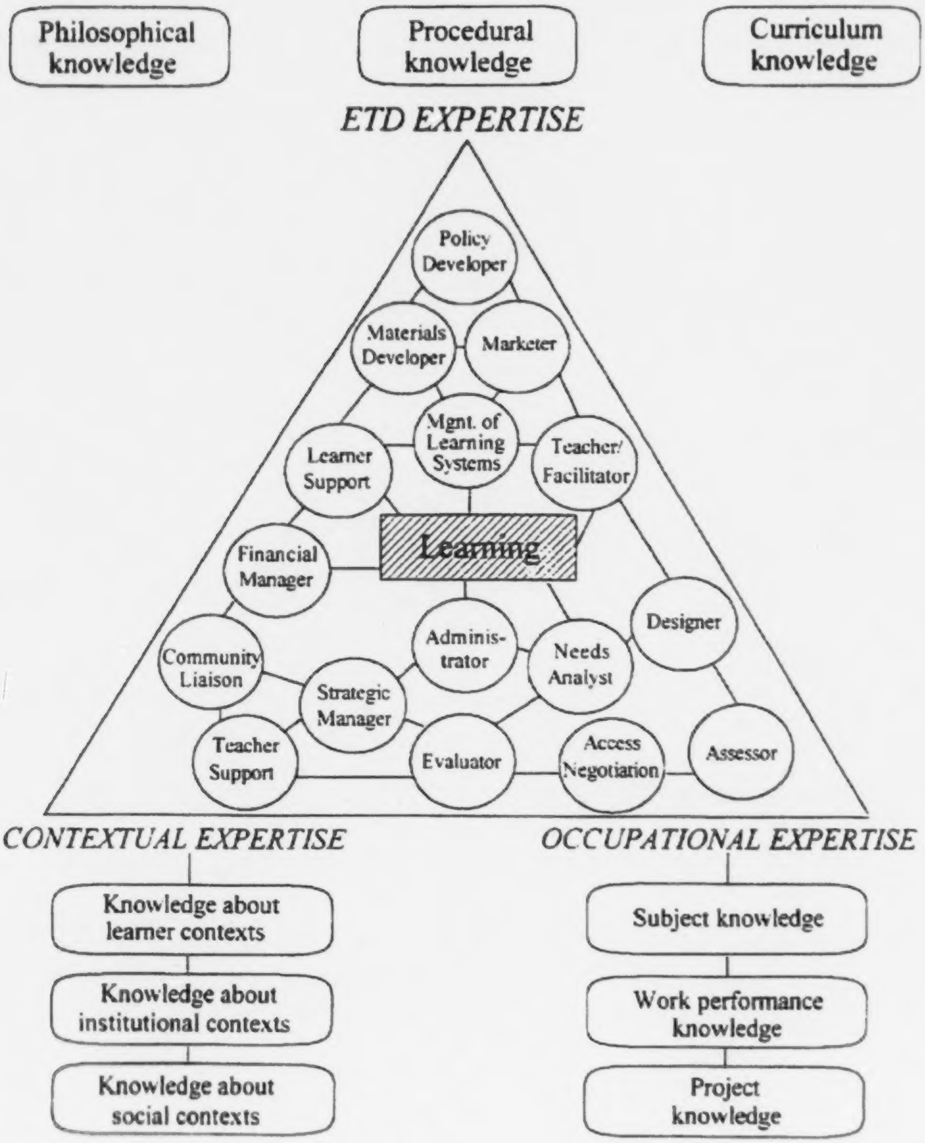
Different sites of practice, and different institutions within these sites, have different stakes in the development of a qualifications framework. This is due to differences in stage and form of professionalisation and in the basis of claims to authority and self-regulation. To put it at its crudest, some sectors of practice have nothing to lose by the process of professionalisation through a qualification structure route; others have nothing to gain.

The 'formalising institutions' site and the tertiary sector within the specialised formal site (see Figure 1), illustrate these extreme positions.

The characteristic of 'formalising' sectors of ETD practice is that primary professional identity is in process of being specialised in pedagogical terms. Emerging or marginal forms of practice are staking claims to professional membership. At the same time, emerging forms of practice are claiming institutional shape and identity. Both processes are facilitated by a NQF. At present, ABET, for example, lacks both institutional home and professional cadre. Our new FET (further education and training) sector is a construct of the NQF drawing board trying to find institutional form.

Figure 2

A QUALITY FRAMEWORK



(National Training Board/Education, Training and Development Practices (ETDP) Project, 1997)

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Under such conditions a qualifications framework (for learners or for practitioners) provides not simply an essential recognition function but the only authoritative recognition — however potential — at the present time. A hierarchy of units or qualification standards provides the public classificatory index — and the authority — for both institution and practitioners to shape professional identity.

By contrast, the secure world of the university will see an ETDP qualification framework as a peculiar intrusion. Classic academic practice is not grounded in teaching but in knowledge production — research and scholarship. This is where the primary institutional values lie and from which the primary classifications of academic performance derive. Scholarship is globally, not institutionally or locally referenced, and authority derives from membership in the global practice of a discipline or inter-discipline. An ETD classificatory device and ETDP qualification system would be seen therefore as giving undue weight — or rather displaced weight — to an essentially integrated component of a larger conception of practice: good teaching is research—based. (The equivalent technikon good practice aphorism is that teaching and research are work-experience-based.) The authorisation of practice does not rest in performance in an ETD domain, and university career progression does not therefore require any formal professional qualification in education — while insisting on the highest formal qualifications in an established knowledge field.

On grounds of secured status and authority, then, the university will not give priority or commitment to the development of an inclusive ETDP qualification structure; instead it is likely to seek some form of strategic exclusion (as in New Zealand) from any state attempt to legislate such a framework for academics. But this does not mean that changes in higher education which are having the effect of specialising academic work will not propel new and marginal sectors of academic practice to attempt to construct career routes and professional identities that employ the capital of a new ETD qualifications structure. The most obvious specialisations are those in academic development and foundation programmes; in educational technology media and assessment; and in quality appraisal, information and management systems. These emerging fields signal a break with the authority of a globally referenced academic discipline. They look towards, and require, some future coherence in an educationally directed systems and information theory, and this may lie within the compass of a future professional NQF.

What both these examples illustrate is the crucial importance of historically constructed *sites* of practice in the process of developing a professional NQF. If the development of such an NQF serves different strategic purposes in different sites then such purposes have to be recognised in any national model directed at recognising quality practices. The strategy for building any professional NQF should harness site-specific agendas. It follows, too, that across different sites of practice different forms and levels of qualification will have major developmental impact and require prioritising in national policy. The alternative is to proceed with a decontextualised standard-setting process that (given huge resources) will produce comprehensive and generic sets of unit standards which will then seek relevance and applicability in multiple institutional contexts — a stage of take-up that on international evidence is likely to be disappointing. (Harris 1997).

The development of a national professional qualification framework must proceed alongside and in critical relation to institutional development across the education, training and development sectors. An untidy commitment-generating NQF, working towards possible E+T+D coherence within some common understanding of a quality framework, seems vastly preferable to a solution to problems that have lost both ownership and location.

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Challenging boundaries in adult and higher education through technological innovation

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Project @THENE (Accessing Technology for Higher Education and New Enterprise) involves the development of a university-level foundation course in new technologies to be delivered in part by computer-mediated distance learning to adult women students in an economically deprived area of London. In this paper we explore ways in which this project attempts to challenge educational boundaries and describe some of the tensions which result. We discuss how the literature on educational knowledge codes and on technological innovation may contribute to a theoretical framework to enable us to make sense of our experience of the project and make reference to new boundaries which may be created as a result of technological innovation in education.

Introducing @THENE and its socio-economic context

@THENE is a partnership between two institutions — a department of innovation studies of a new university and a community-based women's training and education centre — based in a working-class area of London. The name of the project refers to Athene, the ancient Greek goddess of wisdom, industry, women's crafts and war. @THENE is an action research project incorporating the innovative delivery of courses in new technology to adult women students, most of whom are from ethnic minority groups. It has three key aims: to enhance access to IT-related higher education for students from non-traditional backgrounds, by using flexible delivery mechanisms; to implement teaching about multimedia technologies by using the technologies which form the content of the curriculum as modes of delivery; and to explore the broader application of these modes of delivery and the implications of the project for the development of teaching and learning strategies in adult and higher education. @THENE will achieve these aims through the development of a new Year Zero course, part of which will be delivered via multimedia. Students enrol on the Year Zero programme without prior formal qualifications, and after successful completion of Year Zero they are eligible for automatic admission to the first year of a degree course in new technology. When the course begins in September 1997, fifteen students will be provided with networked computers in their own homes, linked to the university's local area network via ISDN lines. The project will use and assess the value of a range of computer-based facilities, including e-mail, the Internet and multimedia study materials. The project has been funded by a grant from British Telecommunications plc. Our work to date has comprised curriculum design, organisation of the technological infrastructure necessary for course delivery and the development of a shared theoretical base to underpin the project.

East London, where project @THENE is located, is 'one of the most remarkably underdeveloped and deprived zones in the affluent South East' [of England] (Hall 1993, 2). Its economic disadvantage has resulted from the de-industrialisation of the 1980s and early 1990s and the consequent transfer of much manufacturing activity to developing countries. East London has been left with a labour force which generally lacks the skills required for post-industrial service sector occupations such as social work, teaching, law, science and computing (Kennett 1994). As a result of economic restructuring, there has been a dramatic decline in full-time employment for men in East London as well as a decline in the number of women participating in the labour market, despite a general increase in the latter in London and Britain as a whole (Rex 1997). In 1991, one East London borough, Tower Hamlets, had the lowest proportion of working women of all London boroughs and the highest rate of female unemployment in East London (Kleinman 1991). In addition, East London has a long history of immigration, as a result of which it has a large number of ethnic minority communities. This demographic pattern is usually associated with social exclusion and high levels of economic inactivity and unemployment. Up to 33% of residents in many boroughs in East London are non-white; the unemployment rate among economically active members of some ethnic minority communities is over 40%. Project @THENE can thus be seen to be addressing the needs of an economically deprived and disadvantaged population.

Challenging, rearranging, and dissolving boundaries

@THENE challenges a number of educational boundaries. To begin with, it seeks to push back the boundary around higher education by extending access to university study for women and members of ethnic minorities, who are under-represented in the higher education sector. Furthermore, it attempts to push back the boundary delineating who may acquire knowledge of new technologies, and to create conditions under which this knowledge is made more readily accessible to women than has tended to be the case in the past: the general absence of women from the institutions which define and create technology and the exclusion of women from fields such as computing and microelectronics have been well documented (see, for example, Karpf 1987; Spender 1996).

Educational activity in @THENE crosses boundaries of time and space, as part of course delivery shifts from an educational institution to the learners' own homes; it takes place under circumstances in which student and tutor do not need to be present at the same time in order to communicate with each other. The boundary between domestic and educational spaces thus becomes blurred. The boundaries between teaching, learning and social investigation become fluid, as project @THENE involves both course delivery and research. Since we define ourselves as being engaged in a process of action research, in which we feature both as subjects and as objects, we are working to diminish the boundary between researcher and researched. Moreover, the technologies used in @THENE open up access to a world of information not classified according to conventional academic disciplines, suggesting that the boundaries between these disciplines may need to be redrawn, or perhaps dissolved, as a result of learning through digital technologies.

The metaphors of boundary-breaking carry connotations of adventure and excitement. These elements have certainly been present in our work on project @THENE to date, but we have also encountered risk, anxiety and tension. In the following sections of this paper, we focus on our experience of some of the tensions, with particular reference to our attempts to negotiate an appropriate location for the project in relation to those disciplines and discourses which may or may not contribute to the understanding of technologies in educational contexts.

Negotiating disciplines and codes

We have been examining existing work on technology and technological change in order to inform the process of curriculum design for the @THENE course, as well as to contribute to our construction of a theoretical framework for our research. This framework is of necessity a cross-disciplinary one, since we work in an institutional context where there is a strong commitment to understanding technology through the application of perspectives drawn from a diverse range of disciplines and subject areas. Members of the team working on project @THENE have backgrounds in sociology, media studies, adult education, cultural studies, physics, computer science, economics and women's studies, and we draw at different times on insights from each of these areas and more.

We have experienced interdisciplinarity by turns as an exhilarating exercise in intellectual hopscotch across fields of knowledge, a bewildering excursion into foreign territory and a struggle for analytic dominance. Sometimes in our excursions to the boundaries of disciplines it feels difficult to find a way back to our disciplines of origin, and the sensation is one of dislocation. At other times we are forced to confront our own tendencies towards intellectual imperialism, as we make assumptions about others' acquaintance with our favourite texts or theories.

Using technology for educational purposes creates a need for people with complementary strengths and skills, as a blend of academic insight and technical competence is required to implement electronic delivery of courses. The mix that is required, of technological skill and critical understanding, implies the existence of a new boundary between those who are comfortable with the skills and culture of cyberspace and those who are not. In the discourse of those who work in the multimedia industries, this boundary is referred to as that between those who 'get it' and those who do not. Some argue that this distinction is partly generational and some suggest that it is also largely gendered (Cole, Conlon, Jackson and Welsh 1994). People with little institutional power or at relatively junior positions in the hierarchy often have technical and cultural skills which those in more senior positions have not acquired. Novelist Douglas Coupland has suggested in *Microserfs*, an exploration of the culture of Silicon Valley, that this generational distinction leads to the possibility that 'everyone over 35 is dead or maimed and out of sight and mind' (Coupland 1996, 14).

We have found some helpful insights which have aided our attempts to theorise about our experience of negotiating boundaries and borders in Basil Bernstein's work on educational codes and the ordering of curricula and pedagogic forms (Bernstein 1977; 1990). Central to Bernstein's project to build a theoretical framework which maps the relationship between knowledge codes, the operation of power and control and the dynamics of social change and stasis is a concern with boundaries and their relative strength and weakness. Bernstein describes the principles used to organise the content of the curriculum (classification) and those used to define the context in which educational knowledge is transmitted and received (framing):

> Classification refers to the nature of the differentiation between contents. Where classification is strong, contents are well insulated from one another by strong boundaries. Where classification is weak, there is reduced insulation between contents, for the boundaries between

> contents are weak or blurred. *Classification thus refers to the degree of boundary maintenance between contents* ...

Frame refers to the strength of the boundary between what may be transmitted and what may not be transmitted, in the pedagogic relationship. Where framing is strong, there is a sharp boundary, where framing is is weak, a blurred boundary, between what may and may not be transmitted. Frame refers us to the range of options available to teacher and taught in the *control* of what is transmitted and received in the context of the pedagogic relationship. (Bernstein 1977, 889)

Bernstein sees the way in which educational knowledge is organised through the educational system as reflecting and reproducing patterns of power and control in the society in which that system exists. He goes on to outline a typology of educational knowledge codes in which any organisation of educational knowledge which involves strong classification gives rise to what he calls a collection code; any organisation of educational knowledge which involves a marked attempt to reduce the strength of classification is defined as an integrated code. Our work on project @THENE may be understood in terms of an attempt to realise course delivery and to carry out research in the context of an integrated code, as we attempt to pull together knowledge drawn from a variety of disciplines and subject areas, and to blur the boundaries between, for example, the 'expert' knowledge drawn from academically sanctioned texts about technology and the everyday understanding generated by students as they reflect upon their personal experience of using multimedia technologies. As Bernstein indicates, a shift from collection to integrated code may be perceived as a threat to the existing social order:

> A move from collection to integrated codes may well bring about a disturbance in the structure and distribution of power, in property relationships and in existing educational identities. This change of educational code involves a fundamental change in the nature and strength of boundaries. It involves a change in what counts as having knowledge, in what counts as a valid transmission of knowledge, in what counts as a valid realisation of knowledge, and a change in the organisational context. At the cultural level, it involves a shift from the keeping of categories pure to the mixing of categories; whilst at the level of socialisation the outcomes of integrated codes could be less predictable than the outcomes of collection codes. This change of code involves fundamental changes in the classification and framing of knowledge and so changes in the structure and distribution of power and in principles of control. It is no wonder that deep-felt resistances are called out by the issue of change in educational codes. (Bernstein 1977, 1056)

Bernstein describes how the change to integrated code may be experienced as challenging and disorienting to educators socialised into a collection code, and suggests that the integrated code 'calls for much greater powers of synthesis, analogy and far more ability to both tolerate and enjoy ambiguity at the level of knowledge *and* social relationships' (1977, 108). The perspectives offered by Bernstein go some way towards helping us to understand some of the tensions we have experienced in the course of our work on @THENE to date. But it is also clear that some of these tensions arise out of sharply differing views of the value of technology in education.

Negotiating discourses

A review of the literature on technology and learning reveals a polarity between utopian and dystopian discourses: between those who view the use of new technologies in education with evangelical enthusiasm, and those who are convinced that increasing use of technology will increase social divisions and inequalities.

One of the foremost proponents of a utopian vision of the impact of new technologies is Nicholas Negroponte, Director of the MIT Media Lab, author of *Being Digital* and columnist for *Wired*, who sees technology as entirely revolutionary and democratising: the higher the technology, the greater the freedom. He argues that

'Until the computer, the technology for teaching was limited to audiovisual devices and distance learning by television, which simply amplified the activity of teachers and the passivity of children ... All of a sudden, [with the introduction of computers] learning by doing became the rule.' (Negroponte 1995, 199)

Negroponte sees the effects of computers in education as universal. The same benefits emerge regardless of the race, class or nationality of any child. He explicitly rejects the possibility that any of these factors determine access:

> ...the dominant forces are not social or racial or economic but generational. The haves and have-nots are now the young and the old. (Negroponte 1995, 204)

Thus the main group to be excluded from the technological revolution are the elderly. If only, somehow, the entire retired population became computer literate, 'the generation gap [could close] with a few keystrokes' (Negroponte 1995, 203).

Throughout *Being Digital* Negroponte fails to address the central issues of the resources that would be needed to bring about his vision. Others who are situated in a utopian discourse also overlook practical considerations. For example, Professor

David Wood, Director of the ESRC Centre for Research in Development, Instruction and Training, contributing to the National Commission on Education, describes the typical classroom of 2015 A.D. as having few pupils, since students will be completing their schoolwork in cyberspace:

> Reliance on books, pens and paper could decrease ... Aspects of curriculum presentation, instruction and automated assessment could be delivered by technology, leaving teachers with more time to provide tutorial support for individuals. (Wood 1993, 1)

These claims run counter to the current pattern at all levels of education, where greater workloads for teachers result from increasing class sizes and cuts in funding which are depriving some institutions of the most basic educational technology.

Writers located in the dystopian discourse, by contrast, are cynical about the potential for open and universal access to technology. They suggest that regardless of the positive potential of technology, existing inequalities within society must be addressed before all — not merely those with economic advantage — can enjoy its benefits. For example, Mosco (1982, 6) argues that any technology will have both positive and negative effects, benefiting some and not others and maintains that the consequences of technology will ultimately depend on its use or adaptation.

Apple (1992), another dystopian, poses the question 'Is new technology part of the solution or part of the problem in education?', and concludes that it is mainly the latter. He suggests that technology has led to 'proletarianisation' and deskilling, claiming that 'between one and five jobs will be lost for every new computer terminal that is introduced' (1992, 110). He also anticipates that new technology will destroy education. Schools, he suggests, will become industrialised training grounds preparing students to enter alienating occupations whilst technology is mistakenly seen as the key to secure employment and affluence.

In project @THENE, we are trying to negotiate the boundaries drawn between discourses. Although attitudes to technology are not always polarised, our experience in @THENE has on occasion illustrated the binary opposition between utopians and dystopians. As part of our cross-institutional negotiations to establish the @THENE course, we have encountered on the one hand colleagues who wholeheartedly embrace technological developments and who have high hopes for the potential of the course (sometimes, it must be said, with limited knowledge of the technology itself) and on the other hand colleagues who express concern about the danger of a computer-supported distance learning course resulting in the loss of jobs or the alienation of students. In contrast, we are attempting to avoid these extremes of evangelical enthusiasm and Luddite despair in the face of technological innovation in education and to concentrate on furthering our understanding of the social relations of technology through monitoring and analysing our own and @THENE students' experience of using IT and multimedia.

Although our work on project @THENE is in its early stages, it is already apparent that the issue of resources will be central to any systematic application of the @THENE mode of course delivery. At the moment we are in the relatively privileged position of having received funding which covers most of the costs of hardware and staff. However, online time will have to be paid for, and if @THENE's aim of widening access is to be achieved, it is unlikely that students themselves will be able to cover these costs. The preparatory work on @THENE is labour-intensive and often complex, in terms both of the development of course materials and of setting up the technological infrastructure. We need to consider how to overcome these economic barriers if groups of disadvantaged adults are to benefit from our work in the future. Unless we can do so, we may be establishing new boundaries (between those who can afford to pay for new technologies and those who cannot) while dismantling some of the old ones.

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Minority women at the iron borders of academe

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This study is a critical reflection on the last decade of my life in academic institutions as a learner, activist, administrator, researcher, and teacher. The analysis is based on a rethinking of my experience as a minority woman in academe from a Marxist feminist perspective. So far this study has raised more questions than answers. This is in part because there is considerable theoretical confusion in the literature on the topic. The topic is rather broad involving the democratisation of education, race, gender, class, anti-racism, and a variety of feminist and other critical pedagogical perspectives on the relationship between knowledge and power.

Locating myself in academe

In order to contextualise my experience, I need to specify some of my basic assumptions about our society and our way of relating with each other. I believe that we live in a difficult period of time. Economically, not only do we have to scramble for ever shrinking resources, but also the much cherished social security is quickly eroding. Socially, too, notions of equality, justice, and freedom are constantly under attack. The opponents of diversity are now organised in governments, the market and civil society.

As social scientists and educators, we are involved in explaining this situation. No matter what sociological points of view we are taking to account for social inequality, students come to our classes in search of answers. Social theories and methodologies are changing so rapidly that it is difficult to keep abreast of development in any academic discipline. This creates stress and anxiety and I am not sure how conscious we are about this challenge, and if we share it with our students. How often do we say in our classes, for example, that 'I am learning about this topic', or 'I am a student of this topic', and even 'I don't know'.

Furthermore, as a result of the fast erosion of our dreams for a just and democratic society, we all are stressed and anxious. Students who enter our classrooms are over-worked, under-paid, insecure, and at best bewildered about their future. And finally, facilitating students' learning about the ways in which power and privilege shape and operate in our lives and what we could do about it, is a social responsibility that I have accepted.

Teaching as a minority teacher

In *To Know as We are Known: Education as Spiritual Journey*, Palmer states that 'real learning does not happen ... until students are brought into relationship with the teacher, with each other, and with the subject. We cannot learn deeply and well until a community of learning is created in the classroom' (Palmer 1993). The scholarship on the art of teaching argues that our pedagogical techniques have been focused more on teaching 'than learning'. We are so preoccupied with what we are teaching or with our own performance that we pay less attention to what students are learning and to the process of learning. A credible body of knowledge on pedagogy has been produced by feminists, anti-racist educators as well as other critical educators who suggest alternative ways of learning, relating, and knowing (see, among others, Bannerji 1995, Dei 1996, Essed 1991, Higginbotham 1990, hooks 1994, Luke and Gore 1992, Maher and Thompson Tetreault 1994, and Minnich 1990). Nevertheless, we have not yet been able to find the magic solution, and I doubt very much if it really exists.

My approach to teaching is not teacher-centred. The learning process is based on making sense of the experiences of all class participants, the students, the teacher, and the social and political context in which learning is taking place. The learning process is guided by feminist pedagogy and is experientially based. Discussions of racism are centred on our own experiences of racism, although we also deal with the accumulated knowledge about this topic. Each of us, whether members of the dominant or dominated groups, has diverse experiences. We share this knowledge with each other and try to make sense of them. We try to understand the relationship between power and privilege and the way that it shapes our interactions. We do not look at race and racism as independent or autonomous phenomena. Racism is tied to the unequal distribution of power in society, and enters into different relationships with class and gender. This is a thread that runs through all learning activities.

Talking freely about experiences of racism, whether as a member of the dominant or dominated group, is quite often not easy. We try to create an environment which is safe and conducive to critical thinking. Although the learning process is based on personal experiences, we use documentaries, newspapers, feature films and guest speakers in order to learn about other experiences. My role as a teacher in such a course is complex; it has been rewarding, enlightening, exhausting, and at times frustrating. As a minority woman, my credibility, authority, and objectivity are all under scrutiny. I expect some class participants to have racist and anti-feminist attitudes. The challenge is to walk the students through the learning process, which enables them to relearn their privilege and oppression.

Being minority, researching minorities

Applying feminist participatory research methodology, I have been investigating the experience of minority women in a number of Canadian universities in order to contribute to our collective struggle for the transformation of the academic institution into a democratic and equitable place. The participants are not subjects who provide raw data for me to analyse. As a participatory undertaking, they engage in relearning of their experiences.

The participants in this research were minority women students from Concordia and McGill universities in Montreal. I did not try to define who a minority woman is. Information about the research simply mentioned the project and its goals. In order to get good participation, I advertised the project widely on- and off-campus. I depended on student associations, the student women's centres, community women's organisations, and community and campus media. I also relied on personal connections and the word of mouth. Some of my colleagues had announced the project in their classes. The response was overwhelmingly positive. For instance, I received e-mail messages and had calls from women who heard about the project over a women's radio collective.

I did not interview participants individually. The participants formed focus groups in different times and places including my home. In each focus group, at least five women participated. The discussion started by addressing the question of who a minority woman was. We did not try to reach an agreed-upon definition. We did, however, reach a consensus about locating our experiences within the power relations in the university.

I used dialogue techniques and various documentaries as a means of raising consciousness among participants. First, I consciously deviated from the positivist approach of posing as a detached researcher capable of extracting unpolluted raw data from my subjects. Second, the fact that the women responded to my call indicates that they were conscious of their status as a minority person. This does not mean, however, that they had theorised their experience. Socialisation and acculturation do not allow us to question social relations as they are. Even in academic situations, in spite of the academy's claim to teach critical thinking, many people, both members of the minority and majority, accept things as they are even though they may have doubts about it. For example, I know, as a minority woman teacher, that my objectivity and authority is often under scrutiny. But like many other women, I do not always have the intellectual tools to conceptualise, theorise or problematise my daily experience of racism and sexism.

After a fair amount of discussion, I provided each participant with a questionnaire. We discussed the questionnaire and they were asked to respond to it at their convenience. They returned them at different times, some after a few days and others a couple of months later. The questionnaire consisted of eight sections and each section included one or more questions. It also contained both 'factual' and 'experiential' questions. Factual questions are designed to elicit information from the respondents regarding their background, their study and work history at the university. Experiential questions are designed to help respondents to reflect on and express their opinions about their experience within the learning environment. The respondents were encouraged to relate their experiences, to describe whatever events seemed significant to them, to provide their own definition of their situations, and to reveal their opinions and attitudes as they saw fit. The questions were open-ended. The participants were diverse in terms of disciplinary affiliation, ranging from engineering to social sciences, and according to academic status, as part-time and full-time members of the institution.

Some forty women participated in the focus groups. Twenty-eight questionnaires have been returned so far. Some of them are in languages other than English or French. So far, I have only analysed twenty-two questionnaires. The respondents have identified themselves as South Asian, Iranian, Indian, Latin American, Black, West Indian, visible minorities and others.

Minority women at the iron borders of academe

It is not surprising that some of the participants noted that they did not experience discrimination. Women do not form a homogeneous population; they are divided according to class, race, ethnicity, religion, and culture; they are also divided along political and ideological inclinations; in other words, certain minority women may advocate the ideology of the majority. This is best manifested in the support of some minority women for the anti-equity position of the right-wing. The right-wing position is theorised by a host of academics and conservative think-tanks, and popularised by the media and politicians.

The majority of minority women participating in this study have experienced various forms of discrimination in universities. Reading the literature on racism and sexism in academe, I found out that these experiences were quite similar to those of the generation before. There is continuity in experiencing alienation, isolation, exclusion, hostility and lack of understanding of their lives. This continuity demands explanation. A relevant question is why there is little change in spite of the involvement of the state and the university in redressing inequality?

State-university relations

The universities in Canada took a number of initiatives in the last two decades in order to redress gender inequality. The result was the introduction of extensive, though superficial, changes in the life of the academy. Everything from gender and race relations on the campus to curriculum to teaching to institutional structure and planning were affected by these reforms. New curricula such as women's studies, ethnic studies, and multiculturalism were established. Hiring policies and practices also were modified to accommodate these changes. A number of administrative measures were introduced in order to facilitate the integration of women. These measures included the establishment of offices of sexual harassment, race relations, employment and educational equity, status of women office and, more recently, human rights offices.

This diversification has occurred largely due to pressures from sources external to the university, i.e., as a result of popular struggles such as the civil rights movement, women's movement, Native people's movements, the environmentalist and peace movements and the activism of gay men and lesbians. Internally, too, the student movement of the 1960s and the 1970s acted as a powerful source of change. In spite of initial resistance, the state and the universities both showed flexibility in meeting these challenges. No one can deny that gender and race relations on the campus have changed to some extent. However, what my findings show is that the balance of forces on the campus has not changed. The historical precedent to the situation today is the struggle for suffrage rights. After decades of organised struggle, women were finally allowed into the legislative halls of Western democracies. Their entry into the parliament has not, however, led to a radical change in gender relations.

This experience offers a challenge to poststructuralist theory. We are told by poststructuralists that power in society is diffused to the extent that one cannot see the state or the market as dominant centres of power. Some argue that the state in contemporary Western societies is withering away. Others who still see the institution of the state argue that it is a site of struggle where minorities, much like power blocs, can negotiate their interests. Some of these theorists see the campus and the state as sites of resistance for disadvantaged groups.

My findings and my own experience indicate that the university is highly structured and has close ties with two major centres of power, the state and the market. There is room in the university for negotiation and resistance. But the two sides negotiate under unequal conditions. The state and the university administration are both highly organised and experienced. The women, especially minority members, are not. Negotiation under these conditions amounts to concessions. It is true that the universities show flexibility in opening their doors to marginalised women. Problems emerge, however, when they demand a radical break with a body of knowledge and institutional practices which negate their experiences of systemic racism and sexism. Such demands call for an all-round change not only within the universities but also in relations between these institutions and society.

Opposition to equity reform has passed from words to action. The conservatives have put the dismantling of equity programs on their agenda. In both Canada and the US, the issue has been debated in radio and television talk shows and other popular media. They argue that equity costs the taxpayer, and is a drag on the economy. Much of this discourse is misleading in so far as research indicates that inequity has serious economic consequences (Glyn and Miliband 1994). The leader of the Tories in the province of Ontario has dismantled the Employment Equity Act. The California university system, one of the largest higher educational institutions in the US, has recently voted against the continuation of their affirmative action programme (Jaschik 1994).

Although the limited diversity achieved so far has introduced certain changes in academic life, it has not transformed the balance of forces on the campus. It is true that the universities show flexibility in opening their doors to women and other marginalised groups. However, universities have failed to meet the demands of these groups. Meeting their demands requires the transformation of the universities into inclusive institutions. Inclusivity means incorporation of alternative knowledge capable of transforming the status quo (Richer and Weir 1995). For example, an inclusive business school should accommodate the interests of Native peoples in maintaining whatever is left of their self-sufficient hunting, fishing and farming economies. An inclusive agricultural school should conduct research and train students to engage in sustainable organic farming. Inclusive departments of economics should conduct research on alternative forms of economic organisation such as non-profit, co-operative, mixed, socialist or self-sufficient production and distribution systems. An inclusive educational institution should promote the feminisation of knowledge, and advocate equality.

Many conservatives feel that these demands for inclusivity amount to a challenge to established traditions of Western culture. Western culture is, however, diverse. What they call Western culture is in fact the culture of the most powerful social classes which command the market and regulate gender and race relations. For example, organic agriculture is as Western as the insecticide-based, large-scale farming. For that matter gender and race equality is also as

Western as male-dominated and racist relations. Thus, the question is not the conflict between a non-Western tradition and a Western culture. The question is, rather, the demand of the marginalised groups for a radical change of the status quo.

The conflict over diversity is not easy to resolve. The forces involved in this struggle are no longer sharply divided into marginal versus central groups. Both the centre and the margin are divided along ideological and political lines. Advocates of each position are found in both the centre and the margin. In the last three decades, some members of the marginalised groups have been able to develop a body of knowledge which is credible, challenging and vigorous. For instance, feminist research has offered a serious critique of the male nature of social sciences and the humanities. This body of knowledge motivates the members of both genders to subvert disciplines which are constructed by the White, male and Eurocentric middle class scholars. It is important to emphasise that although marginalised groups were the motivating force behind these changes, some of their members do advocate the ideology of the centre. It would be more appropriate, therefore, not to reduce the current struggle to a conflict between two clean-cut camps. Although this was the case from the very beginning, it seems that the social base for diversification is now broader than ever before.

The universities are not 'ivory towers'. They are an integral part of the existing social and economic order. Responding to social movements for equality and justice, the Canadian state has pushed the universities to adopt employment equity policies and practices, and has provided limited incentives for more inclusive interventions such as women's access to traditionally male dominated fields of study. However, the state has also promoted the establishment of stronger ties between the institutions and the market that is dominated by powerful economic and financial monopolies. Under the circumstances, academic institutions are in a difficult position to promote diversity, and will continue to favour monopolies of knowledge enhancing the capitalist economy.

Although the conservative offensive is backed by powerful market forces, it is unlikely to succeed in the long run. We can learn some lessons from history. The universities, which were initially in the grip of the church and the aristocracy, were able to free themselves in spite of relentless repression. The struggle for secularisation of knowledge was bound to succeed: the social bases of the student population and faculty changed steadily; members of other classes and women entered the academy; new perspectives and new disciplines replaced the metaphysical worldview. These changes spanned a few centuries in the post-Renaissance period. Now at the end of the century, the institutions of higher education experience a crisis that entails change. It involves a radical rupture with the past.

Conclusions

I have talked so far about the constraints imposed by the capitalist state and the market on the institutions of higher education. In my account, the role of agency — feminist and anti-racist consciousness, the will to change the status quo — seems to be dwarfed by structures that are reproduced ceaselessly. I have tried to locate my experience in the historical context of the current crisis in higher education. In my classrooms, I see the power of agency; we are usually able to understand the ways racism and sexism affect our lives; we try to find solutions and to intervene. Student response has been very encouraging. The participants in the research also demonstrate a strong will to resist existing structures of domination. Viewed from this angle, I can be only optimistic. Resistance to change is, however, prominent once we walk out of the classroom. A serious challenge to all educators is, I think, how to engage with the dialectics of structure and agency.

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Dual tyrannies: breaking the chains of campus and distance education

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The title of this paper was prompted by an article by James C. Taylor (1994) entitled 'Technology, distance education and the tyranny of proximity'. The article was concerned ultimately with the desirability of a multi-team disciplinary developmental approach towards what Taylor called 'mixed mode teaching'. We too have been feeling our way towards a similar conceptualisation using different terms such as flexible learning (Moreland 1996).

The foci and methodology of the research

The research study was concerned with the experiences and perspectives of community health nurses following modular, paper-based distance education provision at a University. The authors are researching 96 students in terms of items such as:

- the effects of learner characteristics such as learning style, home circumstances upon learner approaches to, and experiences and achievements of distance education (for example,. Kolb 1976);
- the structure, content of the distance education materials themselves (for example, Eraut 1975); and
- the role and nature of tutor support (for example, Naylor *et al.* 1990; Bailey 1992).

This particular paper concentrates upon the analysis of the learning materials themselves and the way that they relate to the cognitive and learning styles.

Sample background

Initially, data about learning approaches and experiences of the students was collected by questionnaire. The total research sample of 120 students were sent a questionnaire of which 96 were returned — an 80% response rate. The largest single proportion of the 96 respondents were either working as, or preparing to become, occupational health nurses. Health visiting was the second largest group, followed by practice nurses, district nurses and finally school nurses.

The vast majority of respondents (89.1%) asserted that their initial nurse training was not based on a philosophy of independent study. In addition, only 18.8% of respondents said that they had any previous experience of distance learning (mainly open university) prior to the modules being studied using distance learning materials. Thus, it may be assumed that independent learning was an unfamiliar phenomenon for them. In recognition of this naiveté, this paper is concerned to report upon the analysis of a sample of distance learning materials (units) in two modules — Research Awareness and Nursing Access.

The analysis of the study packages

The way in which materials are structured influences the ease of learning of different students. Melton (1990) strongly suggests that a range of structural cues should be built into materials. These cues include: introductions and overviews; clear statements of objectives; feedback and support and guidance notes.

This paper concentrates upon three units chosen as representative of the learning packages as a whole (Units 1, 7 and 11). In doing this, the learning materials have been described and examined in terms of their 'macro' and 'micro' structure.

Macro-structure refers to the existence of learning aids such as study guides, structured overviews, and advance organisers. Micro-structure refers here to emphasis cues such as emboldening or italicising of text and use of capitals within the text. Graphical cues such as pictures, graphs and tables were also to be included in this category, as was the use of different fonts and page layout (Hartley 1988).

In our opinion, whilst this overall approach is useful, it can still be too blunt an instrument for we need to increase the initial success of students (see Diagram 1 below). Perspectives, for example, drawn from learning theorists (for example, Witkin 1977; Riding and Sadler-Smith 1992; Kolb 1977) suggests that students with different learning and cognitive styles have preferences for different types of structure (Moreland and Carnwell 1996).

The structure of the materials was analysed to identify their suitability for students with different cognitive styles. This was followed by an examination of the appropriateness of the materials for students with different learning styles (Kolb 1976). Finally, since several studies have revealed that nurses have concrete learning styles (Spence-Laschinger 1990; DeCoux 1990), the materials will be examined for their capacity to encourage students to move from a surface to a deep approach to study.

Cognitive style and the learning materials

Cognitive style refers to the stable, trait-like consistency in one's approach to attending, perceiving and thinking (Entwistle and Ramsden 1992). A frequently cited cognitive style bipolar construct is field-independence versus field dependence (Witkin *et al.* 1978).

Table 1 Examples of structure and location within the materials

Location within the materials	Examples of Structure
Separate from the text	• study guides • structured overviews • concept maps
Introduction	• advance organisers, including objectives and outcomes • structured overviews • contents lists • concept maps
Within the main text	• advance organisers • organisational cues such as suggested study methods or patterns • cross-referencing to other parts of text • checklists • separation of text into discrete elements • 'signposts' to direct students to what students will learn next in the module • directions to carry out certain summarising/consolidating activities • feedback following activities.

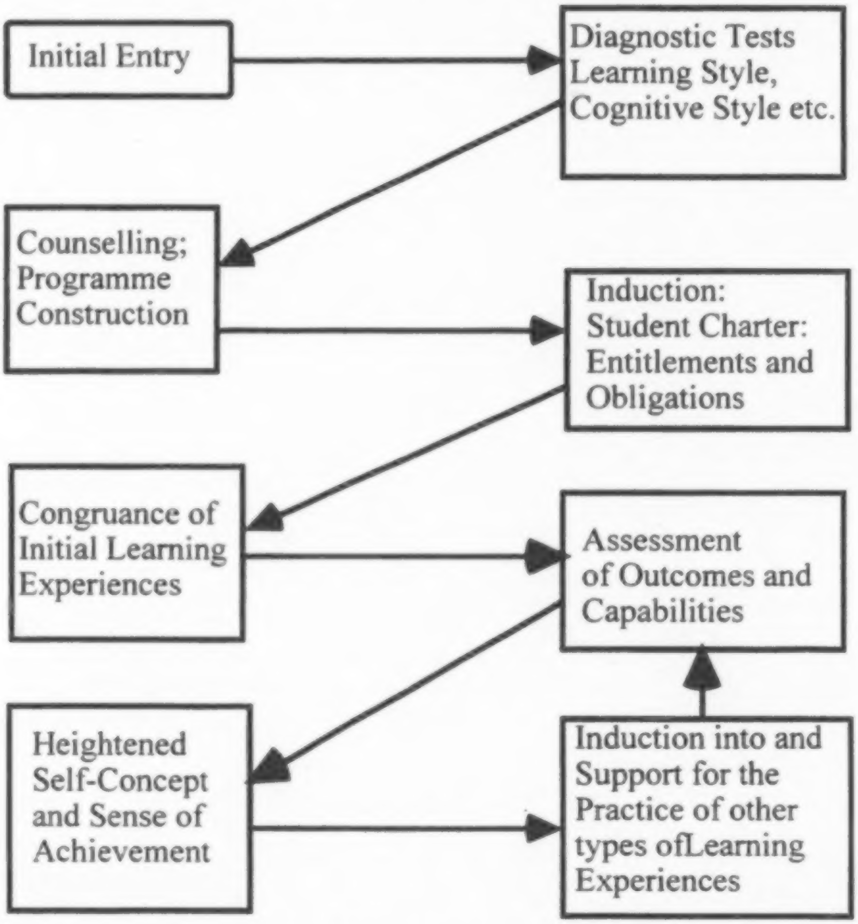
Initial Entry
Diagnostic Tests Learning Style, Cognitive Style etc.
Counselling; Programme Construction
Induction: Student Charter: Entitlements and Obligations
Congruance of Initial Learning Experiences
Assessment of Outcomes and Capabilities
Heightened Self-Concept and Sense of Achievement
Induction into and Support for the Practice of other types ofLearning Experiences

Diagram One: A Flow-Chart of the Ideal Induction Learning Experience of High Education

Table 2: Characteristics of different cognitive styles

Cognitive style	Theorist	Characteristics
Field Dependent	Witkin (1977)	• has difficulty disembedding information from background. • sees global picture and is socially aware • prefers direction, structure and feedback • prefers problem solving through collaboration • needs help seeing the structure and sections of learning material since they have difficulty in disembedding information both in verbal form and diagrams.
Wholist		• has many goals and working topics under their main topic and assimilate information from many topics in order to learn the aim topic
Holist (comprehension learners)	Riding and Sadler-Smith (1992) Pask (1976)	• readily picks up an overall picture of subject matter but may need help to separate topics into discrete elements to prevent the distinction between them becoming blurred.
Field independent	Witkin (1977)	• can distinguish key elements from a distracting background • is analytical and detached from others • internally directed in learning • requires relatively little external structure and feedback.
Analytics	Riding and Sadler-Smith (1992)	• sees the situation as a collection of parts and focus on one or two at a time, to the exclusion of others.
Serialist (operation)	Pask (1976)	• has one goal and working topic and will only move on to another topic when the previous topic is complete.

A field-independent person analyses situations, separating elements from their background and are more internally directed in their learning, requiring less external structure and feedback. Like analytics (Riding and Sadler-Smith 1992) field-independents (Witkin 1977) see the situation as a collection of parts and will focus on one or two at a time, to the exclusion of others. Field-independents are assisted by a unifying overview so that they can integrate the sections into a whole view (Riding and Sadler-Smith 1992). The field-independent cognitive styles are similar to Pask's (1976) serialist (operation) learner, who focuses upon one goal and working topic at a time and will only move on when the topic is completeBy way of contrast, field-dependent students see the whole rather than the parts, thus approaching things in a global way. Field dependants can be likened to wholists (Riding and Sadler-Smith 1992; Pask 1976) who also need assistance in seeing the detailed structure of learning materials as they have difficulty in disembedding information both in verbal form and diagrams. Field dependants prefer more overt direction, structure and feedback and prefer problem solving through collaboration, reaching consensus faster than field-independents in discussion groups. The varying characteristics associated with different cognitive styles are represented in Table 2. Evidence of different types and levels of structure within the units, was examined using various structural features represented in the Table above.

Example analysis: the learning package introductions

The introductions of the three learning packages were examined. All three of the units examined (1,7 and 11) commenced with an overview of the series as a whole. These overviews included sub-sections dealing with the content of each particular unit. These overviews, however, did not detail the scope of coverage of the unit; neither did they provide guidance on study to students, or the preferred study strategies to be employed. Students were neither actively encouraged to seek support from other students or tutors, nor encouraged to develop different types of notes or cognitive maps (Marland 1990).

Advance organisers were not used in any of the units. Objectives were only used at the *end* of one unit to highlight what students will learn from future units in the series. It is doubtful whether students would remember them by the time they studied other units and would therefore be unlikely to use them as a method of assessing their own achievement (Melton 1990).

Example analysis: structure of the main text

None of the three units contained any advance organisers within the text. Organisational cues within the text mainly comprised suggested readings, a limited number of checklists within the progress boxes, and cross referencing to other units, referring to whole units rather than specific page numbers. In addition, activities and commentaries were highlighted by different fonts although signalling devices were not used to indicate when learners might turn to alternative resources (Melton, 1990).

Typographic cues were seldom used to draw readers' attention to specific points, unit 7 being an exception to this. However, when different fonts were used their significance was not explained to readers. The analysis of the texts suggests that they cater for the needs of analytics (Riding and Sadler-Smith 1992), field independents (Witkin 1977) and serialists (Pask 1976) more successfully than for students with other styles.

The materials and different learning styles

The materials were analysed for their suitability for students with different learning styles based upon Kolb's Learning Style Inventory (LSI). Four statistically significant learning styles were identified, considered polar opposites, divergers being opposite to convergers and assimilators opposite to accommodators (Kolb 1976) (see Diagram below).

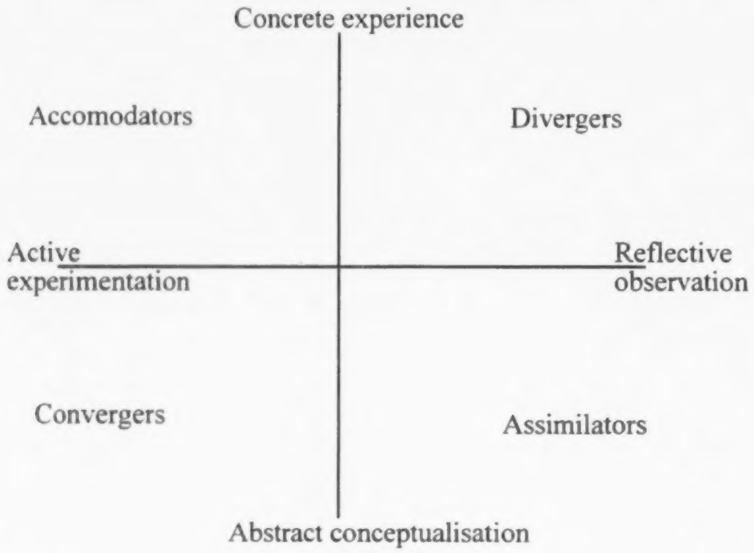

Diagram Two: Learning dimensions and four learning styles (Kolb, 1976)

The materials were subjected to two types of analysis in relation to learning styles. First, there was a quantitative analysis focusing on the frequency of exemplars suitable for different learning styles. Following this, a qualitative analysis was undertaken in which each activity was analysed for its capacity to promote the movement of students through Kolb's learning cycle.

Example analysis: the needs of divergers

The need of divergers was well catered for within the texts by the use of a wide range of examples. Examples could be divided into two types — concrete examples, and examples that apply theory to practice. Concrete examples were used to illustrate a particular point. In contrast, examples used to apply theory to practice were less detailed and are often mentioned briefly. There were 13 concrete examples in units one and seven and 12 examples in unit 11. In addition, there was a much higher number of examples used to apply theory to practice (10 in unit one, 29 in unit seven and 57 in unit eleven).

Divergers often benefit, however, from the numerous activities which required students to generate their own ideas (12, 11 and 11 respectively). The number of case studies with application to real people was fewer (5, 4 and 4 respectively). Opportunities for group discussion were also very few with only one example in unit one, none in unit seven and 3 in unit eleven. There were, however, numerous suggestions to discuss concepts with colleagues. These could have been usefully extended to suggestions to discuss with other students and tutors.

The qualitative analysis revealed that most activities were designed in such a way as to assist divergent thinkers to move on to the following stage in the learning cycle, that is, reflective observation. Firstly, students were asked to consider their work experience and to answer questions related to this, thus promoting reflection on observations of concrete experience. Secondly, concrete examples upon which the student was required to reflect in order to answer the associated questions were provided. Thirdly, students were asked to imagine themselves in a particular situation and then asked to reflect on that situation in order to answer questions.

A frequency count of the number of activities which promoted divergent thinking revealed that 70% of activities in unit one were suited to divergent thinkers, 63% in unit seven but increased to 96% in unit eleven. A reduction in the number of activities suited to divergent thinking might have been expected as students progress from concrete experience to reflective observation. It is difficult to explain the increase in such activities in unit eleven, unless this can be explained by the practical nature of this particular unit which was concerned with dissemination of research, unlike unit seven which was far more theoretical.

Learning style synopsis

Although the units appeared to relate to all four learning styles, the analysis reveals that they catered for assimilators most effectively, followed by convergers. The units were least suitable for divergers. This latter point is of particular concern because divergers have been found to do least well in independent study (Vondrell and Sweeney 1989) and find the experience least satisfying. The materials were also more suited to students who learn through abstract conceptualisation. This is a worrying finding since nurses (for whom the units were written) have been found to have concrete learning styles (Spence-Laschinger, 1990; DeCoux, 1990) which is the opposite of abstract conceptualisation on Kolb's dimension.

The analysis of the activities reveals interesting differences between the units. Unit one catered mainly for divergers, whilst divergent thinking reduces in unit seven which sees an increase in the use of activities designed to promote assimilation.

Conclusions

Our University, being the first University in the United Kingdom to obtain the BS EN ISO9001 quality standard, is concerned to make the learning experiences of all its students (full and part-time) more effective and productive. As such, the findings of this research are being used in the curriculum planning and delivery activities of the School of Health Sciences and the University-wide learning initiative. It is far too early yet to gauge the effectiveness of such initiatives.

What the research is demonstrating, however, is that the tyranny of distance, and the necessary production of resource materials not based on an understanding of student characteristics, can lead to poor learning experiences for students who have different cognitive and learning styles. Similarly, we are drawn to suggest the same for campus-based, face to face learning situations. For some students, these learning experiences are tyrannous, and do not help promote learning or beneficial learning experiences. Instead, what is required is a system of flexible learning based upon the talent development concept of excellence (Austin, 1993: 5).

> Here, excellence is determined by our ability to develop the talents of our students and faculty to the fullest extent possible. The fundamental premise underlying the talent development conception is that true excellence lies in the institution's ability to affect its students and faculty favourably, to enhance their intellectual and scholarly development, to make a positive difference in their lives. As far as educational excellence is concerned, the most excellent institutions are, in this view, those that have the greatest impact — 'add the most value', as economists would say — to the student's knowledge and personal development. (Austin 1993, 6-7)

Instead of being dogmatic, we need to be flexible, and provide learning experiences that suit the particular talents and styles of the students. This does not mean that we would pander to them, for part of a student charter would be a requirement for them to practise and become proficient in alternative styles and learning situations. Where that is done, we provide not only flexible learning but flexible learners. That really is adding value and promoting life-long learning capability.

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Breaking the boundaries of eldercare: the nature of transformative learning and the daughters who care

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I believe the possibility of becoming a caregiver for an elderly parent is in the back of all adult children's minds. Eight years ago, I began to wonder how much longer my mother would be self-sufficient. Today, those thoughts have become reality. For the past few years, my mother has suffered from a debilitating disease. Many times she looked into my eyes, hoping I had answers. I held her hand and searched the depth of my soul to find a reassuring smile — a reassurance I so wished I had.

As my mother's primary caregiver, I have faced a continual barrage of questions, decisions and injustices. I have sat by my mother's side, feeling helpless, crying, and praying. Trying to fulfil multiple roles has taken a toll on me. I have had little time to reflect during this time. As I think back, I see my life has changed. I was forced to examine core values and beliefs. Through my struggle as a caregiver, I have grown stronger. By being my mother's voice, I have found my own. Through the trials of the past few years, I can smile, but this smile comes from a different perspective, a new worldview that emanates throughout my whole being. Through a genuine love for my mother, I am finding a love for myself.

This research grew out of my own search for meaning during one of the most trying and painful experiences I have known. It is an inquiry or search into how women make meaning in their lives while caring for their elderly mothers, the discoveries they make within and about themselves, and the essence and meaning of their final relationship with their mothers.

Background

The convergence of several demographic and social trends has created a phenomenon referred to as the 'ageing of America'. The elderly, those 65 years and older, is now the fastest-growing population segment in the United States (Scharlach, Lowe and Schneider 1981). This trend in ageing, however, reaches far beyond the boundaries of American soil. Through the twentieth century, the proportion of people over 65 increased worldwide (Bond and Coleman 1990). But with this increase, comes an increase in years of disability and dependence that profoundly impacts families, employers, and policy makers. Adult daughters, often juggling numerous roles, tend to be the primary caregiver for their elderly parents (Brakman 1994).

The emphasis of caregiving research has been on the study of demographic trends rather than the nature and meaning of the experience. Although gerontologists have begun to explore adult daughters' parental caregiving roles, adult educators have overlooked this major life transition's potential for growth and transformative learning. If Mezirow is correct and 'the essence of adult education is to help learners construe experience in a way that allows them to understand more clearly the reasons for their problems and the action options open to them so that they can improve the quality of their decision-making' (Mezirow 1991, 203), then it is imperative that adult educators have a better understanding of the eldercare experience. This can be done only if researchers focus their attention on the eldercare experience from the caregiver's point of view. Therefore, this study offers a compassionate, in-depth look at five daughters' experiences caring for their frail, elderly mothers, the nature and meaning of that experience, and the potential for transformative learning. By penetrating the boundaries that surround adult daughters' caregiver's worlds, we might better know what they know, see what they see, feel what they feel, and begin to peel back the layers of obscurity that often smothers their voices.

Theoretical perspective

Viktor Frankl wrote 'to live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering' (Frankl 1984, 9). When the search for meaning is successful, individuals have a sense of personal identity, direction in their life, and confidence in their ability to cope with painful but unchangeable situations. Mezirow describes meaning as 'an interpretation', and further defines making meaning as the ability to 'construe or interpret experience ... to give it coherence' (Mezirow 1991, 4). Our need to understand our experience is perhaps one of our most distinctively human attributes. In the struggle to find meaning also lies the opportunity for growth and learning.

One consequence of an increased lifespan is that the mother-daughter relationship can be the longest-lasting dyad relationship (Barnett, Baruch and Pleck 1991). A daughter's first attempt to make meaning of the world is moulded through her mother's eyes (Chodorow 1978). Firman and Firman espouse that the mother-daughter relationship is one of the most intense relationships a woman ever experiences and that 'without thinking about it, or even knowing it, we are bound and conditioned by our pasts — and most deeply, by the mother-daughter relationship' (Firman and Firman 1989, xiii). It seems appropriate that old beliefs will surface during the final stage of this relationship and create a space for potential learning and growth.

Adult educators are showing increased interest in the connection between life experiences, meaning making, and learning. Mezirow postulates that 'making meaning is central to what learning is all about' (Mezirow 1991, 11) and when we construe new or revised interpretations of experience to guide our actions, making meaning becomes learning (Mezirow 1994). The process of learning to make meaning is 'focused, shaped and delimited by our frames of reference' (Mezirow 1994, 223), many of which are acquired unconsciously through childhood socialisation (Mezirow 1991), or more specifically through the early relationship between mother and child (Firman and Firman 1989). When we confront a new experience with properties that do not fit our expectations, we may create 'new meaning schemes or habits of expectation' (Mezirow 1991, 82). The transformative learning process 'begins with a dilemma and moves forward as distorted assumptions in meaning structures become transformed through critical reflection' (Mezirow 1991, 148). Critical reflection involves critiquing our assumptions to determine whether our current belief remains functional for us under the current situation (Mezirow 1994). Mezirow describes meaning perspectives as 'broad sets of predispositions' which 'determine the horizons of our expectation', and meaning schemes as 'the constellation of concept, belief, judgement, and feeling which shape a particular interpretation. Meaning schemes are specific manifestations of our meaning perspectives' (Mezirow 1994, 223). Both influence the way we define, perceive, and act upon our experience. Transformative learning 'pertains to both the transformation of meaning schemes through content and process reflection and the transformation of meaning perspectives through premise reflection' (Mezirow 1991, 117). These shifts in perspectives are often associated with critical life events or 'trigger events' that precipitate critical reflection and transformations (Mezirow 1991).

Method

To offer a compassionate, in-depth look at the experiences of caregiving daughters, the nature and meaning of their experiences, and the potential for transformative learning, I utilised a qualitative research approach, specifically drawing on phenomenology as a way of capturing the essence of human experience. I also wanted strategies that allowed reflexivity and writing as self-inquiry. Therefore, I used heuristic research (Moustakas 1990) and feminist methodologies (Reinharz 1992) to help me frame my own subjective role as both researcher and researched.

To gain in-depth information, I chose a small sample of four women, plus myself. A primary selection criterion was that the women were their mother's primary caregiver for at least six months. Three mothers had died the year before the interview, while two were still living. I conducted a one- to two-hour participative, conversational interview with each woman. Data about my own story were gathered through an interview by an outside qualitative researcher, journal writings and stories I shared while conducting interviews with the other women. All interviews were audio-taped and transcribed. After collecting the data, I spent considerable time reading the transcripts and journal entries, and listening to the tapes. I wrote detailed narrative case studies for each woman and then conducted a thematic analysis to discover common themes. Each woman reviewed the completed analysis to determine the accuracy of the portrayal. Results of the thematic analysis follow.

Findings

One thing that became evident as I reflected on our caregiving journeys, was that all five of us had dramatically changed during the process of caring for our mothers. Each of us experienced shifts in how we saw and acted in the world, although our understanding of change and learning appeared to be dependent on the amount of time we had to reflect on our experience as well as our distance from the experience. Lisa is still heavily involved in the process of caregiving. When asked what she had learned from the experience, she struggled to find answers. 'I haven't had time to do reflections. It's like we are in the middle of it. It's still changing everyday. It's difficult to just cope with what is happening tomorrow'. The interview became a catalyst for her reflection on the meaning of the experience. In contrast, Mary, whose mother had died last year, moved quickly to a discussion about her learnings, indicating that she had already thought about the question. Finding safe places that allows for dialogue and reflection, such as the interview with someone experiencing the same phenomenon, seemed to be important for these women to understand and complete their learning process. This may be an important direction for continued research.

Although these women shared the same phenomena, each story was uniquely different. Three of the women have completed their valiant roles as caregivers and reflected on what was, what is now and what the experience means to their future. Two of us still struggle to make sense of today and pray for enough strength to get us through tomorrow. Mary lived with her mother all of her life. She believed that her West Indian culture more 'readily absorbed the old ones' into multigenerational families. At the other extreme, Rachel never felt an emotional connection with her mother until just months before her death. Janet, who fondly remembers her mother as her cheerleader and best friend, still struggles with guilt over caregiving decisions a year after her mother's death. Lisa, currently caught up in the process of day-to-day caregiving, is too exhausted to question her decisions. I juggle multiple roles with the most important role being my mother's caregiver and voice.

All of us make meaning in our own ways. Still from within our uniqueness, we share common bonds on our paths to learning. Common to all of our stories were high levels of stress and physical exhaustion, often caused by trying to balance multiple roles. Mary recalled an evening helping her daughter with a homework assignment, 'She had to write sentences for her spelling words. Now when you were in the second grade, how difficult are the sentences? I'd help her think of a sentence, and I'd fall asleep. She would have to wake me up again and again'. Janet echoed similar struggles, recalling a conference she attended, 'When I got to the hotel, I slept for almost 24 hours. I didn't realise how tired I was. But it had been weeks since I had gotten a full night's sleep because I was up with her'. Lisa, still struggling with caregiving exhaustion, mentioned, 'I didn't realise that was the beginning of a long, draining period'. Personally, I remember being so tired that that I would leave the nursing home and fall into bed, not moving. Later my doctor said that I had pushed myself to the point of exhaustion.

When looking at learning, what stood out most in all our stories was the role of emotions or feelings. Similar emotions echoed in each woman's story. One predominant emotion was guilt, evidenced most in Janet's struggle between two competing values, her work and her mother. 'I should have been with her more. That's what I've been thinking since she died. I should have just let a lot of that stuff go and just spent the time with her. But I thought I had to be at work, and nobody else could do it but me. I had to be sure it went right. Now I think, how could I have done that? All my life I thought I would do just the opposite, but when it came right down to it, boy, I was at that job'. Although Mary believes she did her best, she still ponders, 'Did I do the very best? There were times when I was tired and mom just wanted to talk. I would fall asleep while my mother was talking. There were times when she wanted me to do things, and I was really too tired to do them. And you feel guilty about that. Did I do the best? I was tired. I hope she realised it'. Rachel still wonders if she might have noticed her mother's illness sooner, in the early stages of Alzheimer's. She commented, 'I didn't know. I had no idea what was going on because she was always such a negative, irritable, unhappy person. I thought it was just her personality'. Lisa still struggles to provide the best care. After trying to break her mother's fall she said, 'How do I prevent this from happening again? But she just becomes like Jell-O. So that's my biggest fear. She's so fragile at this point that when she is trying to walk, if she falls and breaks a hip, I'm going to feel guilty for the rest of my life'.

Crying out in each of the stories are incredible feelings of loss, final resolution, and one final chance for love. When my own mother suddenly fell into her first coma over four years ago, she was given little chance for survival. I have always been a procrastinator and I grieved deeply at not being able to tell her all the things I waited until the last minute to say. This might have been my worst quilt. My mother was always my best friend, the only person I knew I could talk to and who would love me unconditionally. She survived, but was never able to fully communicate again. I missed our conversations, but at least I had a chance to show her love. Janet's story was similar to mine. She called her mother her cheerleader. 'All my life, she had always been there for me to talk to. After she got sick, I just didn't know exactly what to do. I couldn't say, 'Well, mother do you think we should do this and this and this?' That was hard to get used to, because she had always been the one to have answers. Her mind was totally gone'. Mary remembers comforting her mother, 'So when mom was getting sicker, she just wanted me to hold her. She didn't need to talk, just hold her. When she was better, she'd say, 'Come keep me company'. And I'd tell her all the things that had happened'. Lisa is still resolving her lose. 'I think we became more like sisters. We palled around in the evenings and would go shopping every weekend. I miss that. I miss having that pal relationship, hanging out together. Now I feel like it's more like I'm the parent, she's the child. I have to take care of her. I have to feed her. I have to make sure that she's clean, her clothes are changed, and make sure she's not constipated and things like that'.

Many of the women described caregiving as a spiritual journey. This was particularly evident in Rachel's story as she resolved much of the anger she had held toward her mother. 'I was communicating with her. It was almost like I was doing what I had to do as a daughter. She'd gotten sweeter, but I think it may have been related to her dependency on me. Maybe she figured out that she really needed me, and I could give her all the attention. I did everything I knew to do for her. But the real shift occurred when she was able to say to me, 'I now know what's important in life. It's what you've been telling me all these years, that those we love are important. That we say what we feel is important. And things are not important. How we look is not important'. I don't know how she got to that, but she did. I mean it was very, very clear that she got to it even in the later stages of Alzheimer's. It was amazing that she was willing and aware enough to be able to tell me that. I couldn't believe it. This is what I wanted all of my 55 years – for this woman to calm down long enough to think about what's important in life and to think about how I feel'. Rachel believes this was a spiritual journey for both herself and her mother.

Janet also claimed, 'I've done a lot more praying. I think it's a spiritual thing too, and I regret not letting her share. See, I shared a lot of my stuff, but I never gave her a chance to share her stuff, her needs'. Janet exclaimed that she learned from this realisation, 'It makes me take more time now when somebody wants to talk to me in my family. I take more time. Because she was meeting my needs, but she wasn't getting much back. Because when I would come, I would dump all of my stuff on her, but I don't remember her talking much about her problems. The way I found out was through a diary she kept. Reading her diary now, I see a lot of problems she faced that I never realised. I never did take the time because I was too busy telling her about me. It definitely changes a person'.

Discussion

Many emotions such as rage, anger, loneliness, fear, love and hope wove their way though the stories. What was most apparent in the stories was that the emotion seemed to be a strong determinant of change in behaviour and the emotion was often recognised prior to the women cognitively processing the meaning of the experience. Also apparent in many women's stories was the their lack of critical reflection during the process of caregiving. Throughout the interviews, the women pointed out that they had not really thought about what had happened, but they knew that they had changed and that their actions were different. For many, the reflection did not occur until they entered therapy or until they discussed the experience with me during the interview. It wasn't until they had time to reflect on their caregiving experience that understanding occurred.

In examining Mezirow's conceptualisations of transformational learning, the triggering event or experience appears to be the catalyst for cognitively processing or critically reflecting on the disorienting dilemma. New interpretations of the meaning of an experience are derived from critical reflection and then used to guide future actions. Although my findings agrees with Mezirow, that the triggering event sparks the transformational journey, the role of emotion seems to be a predominant factor in learning for theses caregiving daughters and is only marginally addressed in Mezirow's theory. Emotions and change were readily apparent to each caregiver long before any understanding of their transformational learning. Therefore, for these women, new actions often preceded critical reflection, but reflection facilitated understanding of their new actions, and solidified or completed their transformational learning process. This emphasises the important role adult educators can play in helping caregiving daughters understand the meaning of their experiences and facilitating the completion of the transformational learning process.

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Research findings on the effectiveness of guided imagery/visualisation as a technique in the facilitation of transformative learning

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This paper addresses the use of one transpersonal technique, that of guided imagery/visualisation, which helps us to cross the border — to bridge that gulf which has long existed between the cognitive and affective modes of education, and to break through the boundary which separates conscious from unconscious knowing.

Theory

The idea of transformation has emerged within adult education as a valid goal, but the role of adult educators in facilitating transformation — more a psychological than a cognitive process — is a controversial one.

For Dean Elias (1997), transformational learning, seen from a Western orientation, is a combination of two complementary perspectives: from Mezirow (1991) the theory of transformation of meaning schemes (specific beliefs about self or world) and meaning perspectives (comprehensive world views) through reflection on underlying premises, leading to meaning perspectives that are more inclusive, differentiated and integrated; and the Jungian perspective in which transformational learning 'moves the person to psychic interpretation and active realisation of their true being' (Boyd and Myers 1988) While Mezirow emphasises critical analysis and rational capacities, Jungians claim that a world view is shaped not only by the rational assumptions in the personal unconscious, but also by the symbols, myths and archetypes that emerge from the collective unconscious. (Elias 1997)

An area which has not received much attention from adult educators and in which this type of learning frequently takes place from both these perspectives is in short term personal growth classes offered in adult continuing education programmes in universities, community colleges and organisations. These courses address many issues of ego development: self-understanding, changing of unwanted behaviour patterns, self-acceptance, making transitions to new life stages, which, once the province of psychotherapy, are now finding their way into the classroom.

Facilitators dealing with these concerns tend to identify with one or more of three perspectives:

1) Humanistic educators, who reflect the Rogerian view of the self as 'an ever-emergent sense of awareness of being and functioning' (Rogers 1969), have identified as a primary goal of education the development of persons who understand themselves, understand others and can relate to others. 2) Theorists writing from the critical perspective emphasise the role of educators in assisting learners through psychoeducational practice to 'examine critically and understand the reasons for the psychocultural assumptions which impede our development'. (Mezirow 1991)

3) From the emerging school of transpersonal psychology, reflecting current scientific developments and brain research, comes the position that 'the central goal of education is to learn to use underdeveloped psychological capabilities' and seek the optimum development of human consciousness'. (Roberts 1975).

> Bob Samples in *The Metaphoric Mind* distinguishes four modes of metaphoric thought...which he claims ... help us to... transcend the containers we have created with our minds and bodies,... reaching much higher and more sophisticated awareness levels than any rational mode accomplishes. (Samples 1976)

Method

This paper will address the findings of a research project which explored learning experiences of participants in short-term psychoeducational workshops. The study was conceptualised with the purpose of examining what was possible in personal transformation in such short workshops in order to determine what promises could ethically be made in catalogue copy.

I attended nine workshops as a participant-observer and interviewed 23 participants, 15 twice and seven three times, to find out how the course helped them to change or develop and whether the change persisted after the workshop ended. This is a content analysis on interview data with the inclusion of my own participation notes.

The workshops took place in three institutions: the YWCA, where I was Director of Personal Growth, a community college and a holistic institute. The workshops were selected following a typology of personal growth courses I had developed, and represented courses addressing feelings, behaviour and personality; interpersonal relationships, family relationships and social contact; the intuitive realm. The following workshops were included: Singularly Speaking, two separate classes in Self-Esteem, Letting Go of Clutter, Emotional De-Tox, Sister to Sister, Healing Through the Chakras, Creative Visualisation and Pathfinder: Choosing Your True Career.

I analyzed the data through three different strategies. In addition to classifying workshops, (deficiency or growth, Boshier 1977) I also created groups of people according to how strongly they were affected by their learning experience, and secondarily, by what point they seemed to be in their own process of change following Tarule's steps in transformation. (Tarule 1980)

Findings

The use of visualisation as a significant educational technique emerged from the data during the findings phase as a theme which had not originally been part of the information researched. Eighteen of the interviewees were in workshops in which the presenter used some form of guided imagery, or visualisation. More than half of these indicated that their most significant moment in the workshop took place during a visualisation, and several others indicated something memorable about a visualisation. Many incorporated changes based on these learning experiences.

Visualisations, a term here used interchangeably with guided imagery, were basically of three types, and of varying degrees of depth. On a time continuum, some addressed past experience, some focused on the present, and some were located in the future. Participants experienced three types of effects: 1) an instant of feeling or vision providing some illumination, or a moment of insight, and/or a tangible feeling or emotion of some kind: 2) a realisation of the opening up of options, choices, of seeing or thinking about things differently; 3) the appearance of an image as a metaphor for life, for the self. The time focus of the visualisation was not the single factor accounting for the type of effect, although there was a greater tendency for past-oriented imagery to provide insight about childhood or a family relationship, for present-oriented imagery to reinforce a sense of being, and for future-oriented imagery to open up choices or provide affirmation.

In addition to the above distinctions there were also different aspects to the visualisations, somewhat but not entirely related to the time continuum. Loosely following a classification of imagery suggested by Naparstek (1994), I observed that some are focused on an end-state result, visualising your desired future, imagining yourself already in the condition or circumstance that you wish for. This type highlights concrete, short-term goals, and is widely used in sports, medicine, career advancement, performance and neurolinguistic programming. It develops the skill or capacity to expand one's reality, using a structure to envision interruptions and boundaries more clearly. Within this category there is variation in the degree of intention: 1) the end-state that is clearly envisioned; 2) the end state that needs clearer definition and provides the opportunity to let the desired goal emerge.

Illustrative of the end-state clearly envisioned: 1) a structured guided visualisation showing people how to reduce clutter and then appreciate the gratifying result; 2) a formula for creating the reality you desire through the technique of Creative Visualisation. Emerging end-state: 1) Visualise what you will be doing in 5 years; 2) Visualise and tell a partner what you will have done in ten years; 3) Holding a blank polaroid picture, see yourself emerging in your ideal job.

Another type of visualisation allows creative imagery to elicit intuitive knowledge. The emphasis in this work is on learning to develop inner vision, and listen to what emerges, rather than trying to consciously fabricate specific images. The resulting spontaneous imagery can be described as metaphoric, playing with the symbols of what is happening physically and psychologically, or psychological, changing a person's way of looking at him or herself. These two categories are overlapping, not mutually exclusive.

Illustrative of metaphoric imagery: 1) Visualise a container of any kind, and fill it to the level of your job satisfaction; 2) Imagine the feeling when you can't speak up for yourself — give it a form, a shape. (Later) Go in and change the image to something else; 3) Choose one chakra, go into it and meet an animal guide; 4) Free association, past oriented: visualise a landscape, a smell, a taste, a pet, a person close to you, an image. A psychological visualisation, longer and a little more complex, provided guided imagery for dissolving blocked energy from the past with the aid of a helper.

A third category, defined as feeling-state, is directed at changing mood or emotional tone in a broad way. This was illustrated by a loosely structured visualisation to 'take a vacation' and go to a place you love, paying attention to all details and sensations.

Altogether there were eleven visualisations represented in seven out of the nine workshops used for this study. Participants described the following learning experiences:

1) Insight/Emotion

Participants reported a moment of insight, of seeing something concrete, and/or a strong, tangible feeling or emotion.

Marie, a woman of 75, who had been active in politics, in encountering an obstacle with her helper, opened a stuck door and saw a scene

> ... when I was about five years old and I showed up on the porch with my pretty little pongee dress on, ...that I put on this beautiful ribbon tied around the middle which I thought was so lovely, and my mother made fun of me when I appeared in this, she laughed at me, which really embarrassed me, and that was probably the beginning of my feeling stupid all my life.

Another participant described the same visualisation as follows:

> I got in touch with ... whatever, and I was helped by something, it was like a man's face — I don't know who it was, and it was like — this is our job ... It's like getting rid of a blockage. I really felt like this big ball, it was huge. I was really intimidated by it ... but somehow in my mind's eye I melted it down with my power in my hands... The next thing I knew, it started to shrink — slowly it was melting. It was really weird, and little by little it shrunk even more and it got smaller and smaller until there was a little bit left. I couldn't sweep it away. It was like it was stuck, embedded...like that movie *Aliens*, where everything is stuck in that goo. I couldn't get rid of it in any other way but to know that it was in my power. The next thing I know — it was gone. I thought, wow! This is great. It felt great. I felt so relieved. If I could do it that time, I could do it again.

2) Sensing of choices

Participants experienced a sense of having choices, or options, going beyond present thinking or seeing different interpretations.

Cynthia was helped in thinking that she did not have to be in a relationship, that she wanted 'a reprieve from the whole thing, anyway', and just wanted 'to have some fun'.

> ... although I find I may never do what I visualised, I might, I might not, during the session, it helped me to see I don't know — just to open up to see that there are a lot of options.

She had visualised herself with her own consulting firm, and 'I still — just thinking about the idea appeals to me...down the road'.

Christine, the youngest participant, (20) responded to the question, 'Do you use the visualisation in any way?

> I think I do. I just like think about a lot of stuff, ... about things that I want to happen, ... I mean, just seeing that, even just seeing me as a different person, just visualise myself as that particular person in different situations.

This grew out of her experience in an end-state visualisation which she described as follows:

> We had to think of like where we would be ten years from now ... what direction we are going to take in career and all this other stuff, ... and that was one moment that stands out, because, well think, will you be married, what career, where will you be living, just live it in your mind that it's now. I think it may be more significant for me than for the others because I am younger, and thinking about it now, I have all these choices to make.

Eileen saw both confirmation and alternatives in her emerging polaroid:

> What sticks in my mind ... is an image of being in an outdoor amphitheatre, and some kind of concert or event is happening that I put together...and I'm looking at what I've created with pleasure and pride — (the same feeling I feel on the first day of [my] programme when I see hundreds of people functioning in various areas, at their tasks) and I felt that, but it was much more elaborate, something like the Hollywood Bowl. ... in a sense this was so much beyond what I have done before, that it was going from a who, me? to a why not me?

Mary, a UN employee, saw a scene in her emerging polaroid that revealed to her, 'I realised that I didn't want to be in a western country. I hadn't realised that before'.

3) Metaphor for the self

Two participants described visualising an image as a metaphoric way of seeing themselves. Both of the following examples reflect Samples' integrative metaphoric mode:

Maria responded to the question, 'Did anything stick in your mind?'

> The flower ... I thought that was so beautiful. She said, open your heart like a flower ... I think that's what she said, opening up... that touched me. I saw a flower, a beautiful flower. It was like a rose, white, with a delicate streak of colour, pink or red, a beautiful metaphor for the heart. I could even smell it. It was just great. I think I have ... I've incorporated the flower as a form of prayer, for me to be open, not to be closed.

Two months later, in a follow-up interview, Maria said, 'That was a powerful image for me, because when she said that I instantly visualised a flower. I even remember a painting by Georgia O'Keefe ... I saw my flower open, it was beautiful, open, radiant, and yet I didn't feel that way — it was interesting. But when I thought of it, I felt a sense of relief and opening up. It's an image that can literally change the way you feel'.

The following account shows how imagery without an opportunity for critical reflection may be unrecognised or out of awareness. Marla, a young woman who was having difficulty moving out of her parents' apartment, said:

> I visualised a fish — it was swimming, no no, it was crawling on the ground and there was a pond, or some water, a large amount of water on the side, and I saw this fish coming towards me, communicating with me that he wanted water and love and I took the water with my hands, with the palm of my hands like a cup from the pond and I made like a little puddle, and then I put the fish in the puddle. Okay, he's happy now. I didn't really think about what that represented, and then Nancy pointed out what puzzled her was, why if there is a pond over

> there would the fish be swimming on dry land? That really startled me and it woke me up ... I basically came to the conclusion of well, I'm that fish, and I haven't given myself the home where I really belong.

Mezirow (1991) has defined critical reflection as reflection on content, process and premise. Cranton (1995) offers helpful questions for educators to consider in applying these categories. Adapting these questions to the experiences reported by participants in psychoeducational workshops, content would correspond to awareness of core beliefs: What are my beliefs? What do I want? Process would address the awareness of intention to change: How did I get this way? How can I change and have what I want? Premise seemed to be: Why do I believe I can't have what I want? What is the basis of this belief?

Metaphoric visualisations, whether guided or spontaneous, answered content questions; Eileen was astonished to realise how little job satisfaction she had after nine years: 'I kept thinking, oh, come on, it must be a little more than that, but I couldn't get it to move — the container wouldn't lie'. Psychological answered process questions; Marla, who encountered blockages, felt empowered to dissolve them, and to be able to do it again. End-state answered both content and process; for example, Mary not only realised through her polaroid picture that she preferred an Eastern country, but that she could become more active in seeking that type of placement.

Critical questioning by the presenter provided a tool for subsequent questioning of premises. Adopting a right brain-left brain dialogue technique, one participant later realised self-imposed limitations: 'I am the only one telling myself these things'.

Imaging or visualising has been shown to be a function of the right hemisphere of the brain. Research conducted by Ornstein and others (Bogen, Sperry, Zaidel, Nebes, Corballis, Buzan) reveals (posits) that the left hemisphere is the reasoning, analytical, logical half, using language for its sequential thinking, while the right hemisphere is spatial, artistic, intuitive, and integrates material simultaneously. (Roberts 1975)

> Mezirow (1991: 24), in describing the major processes by which we perceive and comprehend, contrasts Heron's categories of presentational and propositional construal. This contrast corresponds to the right brain-left brain distinctions made above: Presentational construal (which is pre-linguistic) is associated with perception and refers to construing immediate appearances in terms of spatio-temporal wholes, distinct processes and presences and can be a significant influence on and serve as a monitor for propositional construal ... which is associated with comprehension or cognition and involves experiencing things in terms of the concepts and categories that come with our mastery of language.

Conclusions

Transpersonal psychology in education is primarily concerned with the optimum development of human consciousness and focuses on intra-personal experience as the means to that end. Attention is directed to the inner self rather than the personality, and although the change process may be described as learning, it cannot be taught in traditional ways. This kind of training for awareness 'is intended to facilitate the discovery of meaning and connectedness in the depths of the psyche' (Jung 1958). Humanists have stressed the importance of joining cognition with affect, and critical theorists have reinforced this point that 'emotions are central to critical thinking' (Brookfield 1987).

Presently there is a lack in the academic literature of descriptions of the type of learning experiences mentioned here. The field is limited in its understanding of non-rational modalities and experiential techniques which can help open up perspectives that contribute to the understanding of critical thinking and how transformative learning really happens. Visualisation is one technique that blends the power from several perspectives, and through such integration can be used to amplify critical thinking and critical reflectivity. It is important that educators include activities that access the full person. In calling for a blend of Mezirow and Jung, Elias highlights how integrating educational perspectives and incorporating experiential techniques can contribute to significant learning for people, providing the opportunity for multiple modes of knowing. Such understanding can contribute to the kind of education that provides people with the psychic strength necessary to support subsequent social action.

For adult educators who might feel hesitant to utilise an unfamiliar activity, a simple example is presented here to show how the facilitator of Singularly Speaking introduced a visualisation. Some visualisations were done with taped music in the background — this one was not.

I'm going to suggest something; do it if you like, or use this time to relax. (Speaking more slowly, with pauses) Make yourself comfortable in your seat. If you like, close your eyes. See if you can block out what's around you. If interfering thoughts come along, just let them go by. Move inside yourself. Now think, see yourself five years from now. What will you be doing? Notice the details. Where are you? What are you wearing? What is the temperature in the room, or wherever it is that you find yourself? Allow yourself to be in that moment, observe everything that is happening.

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Boundary setting by adult education providers in Malaysia

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The term adult education provider in this paper refers to institutions/agencies/associations which offer educational programmes to those 18 years old and above who seek education outside the formal schooling system. In Malaysia, formal schooling is from year 1 (standard 1) to year 11 (when students sit for their Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination which is equivalent to GCE O level examination) or year 13 (for those who pursue their schooling until they sit for Sijil Tinggi Pelajaran Malaysia (STPM) which is equivalent to GCE A level). Adult and continuing education are programmes offered by these providers, which include both formal and non-formal education. An adult's learning process takes place in a social system. In a social system, one of the comprehensive or master processes is boundary maintenance (Loomis 1967). Adult education providers can maintain the programme's boundary by demarcating who can have access to a particular programme. Such a boundary can be conceptualised as a border that defines the inclusion of certain adult learners but excludes certain others from participating. Borders can be physical or otherwise. Demarcation of borders can be by race, culture, class, sex, age, and ideology.

Today education for the Malaysian adult population is provided by various providers. Who are these providers? Do they set boundaries for educational opportunities in Malaysia? If they do, what are the bases of the borders? How do they affect the adult learners' access to continuing education? Data from a survey on adult education providers give insight to the above concerns. The data are complemented with documented inquiries and observation of adult education programmes in Malaysia.

Methodology

A listing of institutions that offer educational programmes to the public, their own staff or other agencies' personnel were obtained from various sources which include the government sectors, the private sectors and the non-governmental agencies. On 15 July 1996, 93 adult education practitioners from 32 agencies were invited to attend a workshop at Universiti Putra Malaysia to deliberate issues and challenges of adult education in Malaysia. The workshop's participants provided further names of other adult education providers. Based on these resources, 565 agencies were purposively sampled to be surveyed. The respondents were selected from the Klang valley area which housed the capital city, Kuala Lumpur. The head offices of most of the government agencies are located in Kuala Lumpur. The Klang valley is also host to most of the private training institutions, institutions of higher learning, and business and manufacturing industry. Twenty six major adult education providers located outside the Klang valley were also selected to participate in the study.

A structured questionnaire with both closed and open ended questions were personally sent to and collected from providers in the Klang valley by enumerators. Data from providers outside the valley were collected through the mail. A total of 366 (65%) providers responded to the survey. The data were analysed by using the SPSS program for descriptive statistics.

Findings

The data shows that adult education programmes in Malaysia are provided by three major providers: government agencies (39.6%), non-profit organisations (NGOs) and institutions (12.3%) and private sectors (48.1%). This framework is almost similar to that proposed by Apps (1990).

All the agencies in the study are grouped as providers of programmes in any of the following groups: agricultural education, higher education, community education, religious education, and staff development programmes. The providers are further categorised according to target groups and/or disciplines of study. Apparently the providers are target- or discipline- or issue-specific in the way they offer or provide adult and continuing education programmes. What makes them include or exclude certain groups or fields? Who has the power to set such boundaries?

Who has the power to set boundaries?

One of the bases for examining the power to set boundaries for the adult and continuing education programmes is their *raison d'être*. Many government agencies in Malaysia are enacted by legislation, for example, the Farmer's Organisation Authority (FOA) was established under the Farmer's Organisation Authority Act in 1972 and their jurisdiction is to provide economic and social development of farmers who are registered members of FAO. In the case of the private sector, a business organisation in Malaysia must be registered under the office of the Registrar of Company (ROC). Under its article of association, the organisation would define its nature of business. A private higher institution of education is subject to both ROC and the Ministry of Education. The institution needs to apply for a licence to provide education programmes to the public. In the application the institution would propose the programmes of study, the admission criteria, the duration of study, the fee structure, the premises and other requirements imposed by the Ministry. The Ministry of Education would normally evaluate the application and specify endorsements such as where the institution can operate (the premises) and what programmes it can offer and the tuition fee it can charge and the list of other conditions to comply with the national education policy.

An NGO is also subject to regulation stipulated by the Registrar of Society (ROS) that would set boundaries to its services. One of the requirements is to furnish the objects of the organisation. The Agricultural Institute of Malaysia (AIM), for example, stated one of the objects is '*To act as the official body representing the professional interest of the Agriculturists and Agricultural Scientists in Malaysia*'. Such statements are endorsed by the ROS and the organisation sets its boundary to agricultural professionals and scientists in Malaysia.

Apart from the sanctions set by the Government's regulatory/enforcement agencies and the organisation, other power houses that set boundaries include the user or clientele. Meeting the clientele's need is one of the major concerns of adult education providers (Merriam and Cunningham 1990).

Access to the programmes is also based on the practice of meritocracy. In Malaysia, due to limited places for admission to local universities and colleges, students are screened based on certain academic achievement in their SPM or STPM examinations. For example, a university sets a minimum qualification a student must obtain to get admission. A minimum qualification of 18 aggregates in the SPM or at least a 'C' principal grade in three relevant subjects like physics, chemistry and mathematics for STPM candidates was set by one local university.

How are the boundaries set ?

Borders of adult education in Malaysia are set by:

- the teaching-learning location, urban versus rural
- the learners' age group
- the learners' gender
- the learners' religious belief
- subject area of specialisation
- interest group
- the programme fee structure

Border set by teaching-learning location; urban versus rural

Most of the institution of higher learning are located in the urban sectors. By virtue of their location, post formal schooling (after year 11/13) opportunity is more available to the generally better-off urban dwellers. Upon completion of their higher education, graduates from the institutions of higher learning are more likely to settle and work in the urban areas where job opportunities both in the government and private sectors are more available. They add to the country's pool of middle and higher class population which are also relatively better educated compared to their rural counterparts. With higher education they are more likely to seek further learning (Cross 1982). Similarly, besides being able to afford better higher education for their children, they are more likely to want their children to pursue higher education. And by themselves dwelling in towns where most of the higher learning institutions are located, their children will have better access to further education. Thus access to learning and subsequently socio-economic well being become a vicious cycle, demarcated by physical (urban versus rural) border. Merriam and Caffarella (1991) concur that socio-economic status is a barrier to participation in adult education.

Border set by the learners' age group

Some adult education providers offer programmes to clients of specific age groups. The study shows that 12 agencies who responded to the survey are involved in activities to meet the needs of the youth group. In the Malaysian context, youth comprised individuals between 15 to 40 years old. Five of these organisations are government institutions and seven NGOs. Responses from these institutions revealed that in 1996 the major educational programmes carried out serve to develop the youth's potential and leadership ability. And educational forums like *Seminar on youth problems* serve to guide them in dealing with social ills like drug addiction and gangsterism which are quite prevalent among this group of people. Such problematic situations however also called for the involvement, support and guidance of others from different age groups, for example, the parents. This opportunity is deprived by excluding others as participants in educational programme for the youth.

Borders set by learners' gender

Five of the providers surveyed are non-governmental organisation institutions for women. They offer programmes to address members' interests and needs. These include forum/training topics like; *Man-woman relationships, Adolescent sexuality, Educating the public on the domestic violence act, Early childhood care and development, Gender training, and Equality, women and Islam.*

The above topics have to deal with things that are also of concern to men. For example for a couple, it takes two parties, men and women to negotiate what are his or her rights. Without the co-operation of the other partner, a women might not be able to exercise her rights. Thus both sexes should have access to the information.

Then there are also learning situations which tend to set boundaries against women. This prevailed in the agricultural sector where extension programmes tend to overlook the needs of women farmers. Consider this scenario (Mazanah *et. al.* 1996): There is training conducted by the local extension agent to promote and guide farmers in the village on keeping farm records. The extension agent is a male. All the 32 participants are also men. When a fellow farmer, a woman, was asked why she did not attend the session, she said that the session was only meant for the men. Her husband who only helps her in the farm (since he works full time in the nearby sawmill) was invited to attend the training, but not her. Although the agricultural extension agency is supposed to provide an agricultural advisory service to farmers irrespective of their gender, it is common to find only men are invited to participate in agricultural extension programmes (Mazanah *et al.* 1996). In the context of Malaysian culture, especially in the rural areas, women's place is supposed to be at home, to care for the family and household. Even though women are also involved in agricultural production work, their learning opportunities are concentrated on reproduction activities (Mazanah *et al.* 1996, Airmy *et. al.* 1991). Consequently women farmers do not have direct access to recommended agricultural techniques essential for efficient farm management.

Women have fewer *economic* resources than their male counterpart. This situation further marginalises them from having access to learning. In rubber production, women are actively involved in activities like tapping and latex collection and processing. An inquiry into women's access to training on rubber production technology revealed that their access to training is associated with land ownership (Vanaja and Mazanah 1996). Owner operators by virtue of being owners of their rubber holdings were invited to training on rubber cultivation. Being landowners they are registered with the local extension agency and are in constant contact with the extension personnel stationed in the area. As such they are kept informed and are invited to training by the extension agents or the local leaders. Since men predominated over women in terms of land ownership (Maimunah 1993), they have better access to the training.

Border set by learners' religious belief

Malaysia is a multiracial nation with three major ethnic groups: Malay, Chinese and Indian. Islam is the official religion. The country's other major religions are Buddhist, Hindu and Christianity. Twenty adult education institutions surveyed offer programmes to clients of specific religious groups. The programmes they offer vary from those which deal with religious subject areas to issues that concerns social, family and individual well being. Some of these concerns are common to people of all religious beliefs. A larger number of the audience could benefit from the programme if access is also extended to them. Furthermore, better understanding of other religions contributes to enhancing religious tolerance among Malaysians.

Border set by subject area of specialisation

Many adult education providers offer programmes of specific subject area/discipline. Twenty public agencies surveyed carry out agricultural related programmes for farmers, twelve on health related matters, four cater to industrial workers on matters related to welfare and safety measures in the workplace, and three agencies deal with beginners in business and entrepreneurship activities. By focusing on a specific subject area, these agencies limit their clients to those who are interested in matters related to the disciplines. Providing services according to a narrow area of specialisation poses problems for a client who has to draw upon different resources to help him deal with a problematic situation.

The case of Pak Uda, a farmer from Pahang (Mazanah and Saidin 1997) may serve to illustrate the situation. Pak Uda owns a farm where he plants cocoa, rubber, fruit trees and vegetables, rears a few cattle and also freshwater fish. When he encounters problems to do with his cocoa holding, he goes to see the agricultural extension agent. To replant his old rubber holding, he seeks advice from a rubber extension agency. For advice on his cattle he refers to the veterinary extension advisor. The fishery extension agent counsels him on matters related to his fish rearing. Pak Uda ends up utilising quite a bit of his time seeing these different extension advisors. Similarly much of his working time will be taken if he were to attend training sessions on different agricultural subjects conducted by different agents at different time in the village. The local advisory resources that he can draw upon to help him with his problematic situations include the Department of Agriculture, Department of Fisheries, Department of Veterinary Services, Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority, Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute, Agricultural Bank, and Farmer's Organisation Authority (Mazanah and Saidin 1994).

Border set by interest group

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play an active role in educating the public. Twelve percent of the respondents were from the NGOs. According to their members' interests, the NGOs could be categorised to that of: Professional (nineteen agencies), Religion (seven agencies), Youth (seven agencies), Women (five agencies), Consumer (two agencies) and Environment (two agencies).

The professional associations offer continuing professional education (CPE) programmes to their members. Their major function is to keep members up to date in their professions. These associations include insurance, personnel management, translation, education, journalism, industrial relations, linguistic, engineering, architecture, and accountancy.

Apparently the public at large cannot benefit from these organisations when they focus on members' interests and limit participation to interest groups. The exceptions are the consumer and environment NGOs.

Border set by the programme's fee structure

Most providers in the study charge fees to those participating in their educational programmes except for the extension and outreach programmes. The government institutions of higher education charge a student between RM500 to RM950 per semester for a bachelor degree course. The graduate programme is from RM500 per semester. Private colleges charge as little as RM800 to as much as RM19,600 per semester. Training houses' charges start from RM200 per day per person. Special training packages for specific groups of personnel are charged as much as RM15,000 per person.

The concept of user pays in education and training is inevitable. When fees are charged, access to education is only to certain group of the population from a particular socio-economic status.

Conclusion and implication

This study emerges with notions suggesting that adult education providers in Malaysia are boundary-operated. There is a set of parameters that act as functional boundaries which are likely to alienate adult learners with less than adequate opportunity to participate in learning activities provided through adult and continuing education *programmes*. The said set has been elaborated in the section dealing with findings.

There are a few important implications that we can draw upon from the study. One of them has to do with organisations perpetuating their focus on strategised mission, goals and objectives. To realise such ends, the organisation seeks to endow itself with relevant resources. In doing so, the organisation ends up building itself into an island, creating borders that define who can get access to the system in the boundary. The relationship that the organisation creates with the relevant legislation system, and the affiliation with certain interest groups forms an iron triangle. The relationship results in concepts such as boundary maintenance, protecting one's own turf, fraternity and the like. The providers of adult and continuing education are no exception to such a pattern. The boundaries set made educational opportunities available to specific group of learners who belong to the system within the boundary.

Secondly, the providers are actually competing for scarce resources such as funding, manpower and access to clientele. This leads to a dilution of resources and duplication of efforts among the providers. Adult education *programmes* are running into inefficiency traps. Eventually co-ordination between providers with common *programmes* may be difficult to realise. The clientele need is basically in relation to their problematic situations and the providers must help the clients to be better managers of their own situations. Such intervention may require co-ordinated, collaborative and integrated efforts between relevant providers. The illustration about Pak Uda earlier is suggesting how co-ordination can enlighten him with his problematic situations including time management in dealing with different agencies.

Co-ordination efforts among the providers is essential to ensure equal access to opportunities for learning, to account for effective and meaningful use of funds especially those who use public funds, and definitely it will open new avenues to provide quality services. In the airline industry, airline companies compete fiercely but at the same time some of them collaborate in partnerships such as code sharing. In the same gesture, the providers of adult education need to determine a smart balance between collaboration and competition.

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Capital, class and adult education: the international political economy of lifelong learning in the European Union

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The year 1996 was designated the European Year of Lifelong Learning, an event which was welcomed by many adult educators who see this recent interest in the field as proof of its importance to the new Europe (Lungdaard 1993; Nuissl 1994; Oglesby and Bax 1993). Lifelong learning has been one of the key concepts in the field of adult education, and for it to be adopted by one of the world's most powerful institutions is, on the surface, a major boost for practitioners who generally have always had to battle for funding. What is missing from this fanfare, however, is an awareness that adult education is never a politically neutral exercise. Adult educators always work in the context of particular power relationships, or in the words of the conference, within a certain set of boundaries that shape opportunities for adults to learn. The purpose of this paper is to critically examine the context within which the European Union's policy of lifelong learning was developed. First I want to briefly outline the relationship between lifelong learning and the European Union.

Lifelong learning and the European Union

The introduction of the European Year of Lifelong Learning, launched in Venice on 2nd February, 1996, continues an effort on the part of the European Commission to prioritise the concept of lifelong learning in the European Union. Hundreds of activities took place in 1996 in order to facilitate the dissemination of the concept, including the likes of conferences, seminars, training activities, television programmes, fairs, competitions, and the launching of pilot projects. This interest in lifelong learning can be traced back at least to 1989, when the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT) published a book entitled '*Education for life: a European strategy*' (Kairamo 1989). It is a summary of the activities of the 'Standing Working Group on Education' which was set up in 1987 by the ERT to identify problem areas as regards education and industry. It also set up a special task force in lifelong learning and adult education. From this task force, the ERT identified the necessity of 'creating a European concept of lifelong learning and the need for closer co-operation and partnership between all parties concerned with education and training (Kairamo 1989, 3)'. In 1993, the European Commission published a White Paper on growth, competitiveness and employment (European Commission 1993). Chapter seven deals with the adaptation of education and vocational training systems, and one of the proposed actions was to organise a 'European year of education' which would be one way of 'sending an important signal and creating added awareness' (p. 6). Then, in 1995, another White Paper was published, this time a White Paper on education and training, entitled '*Teaching and learning: towards the learning society*'. It was this document which acted as the launching pad for the European Year of Lifelong Learning.

It is clear, then, that lifelong learning has been on the European agenda since the 1980s. This is surprising at first, as prior to 1992 and the introduction of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), no legislative power had been accorded to the European Union in the area of education. The original Treaty of Rome which established the European Community in 1957, outlined only the role of the community in implementing vocational training initiatives. Between 1957 and 1992, education policy was legally deemed to lie within the exclusive jurisdiction of each member state. With the introduction of the TEU, this situation has changed. The TEU, more commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty, included an article on education, article 126. Now, for the first time in its history, the European Commission has at least partial jurisdiction over education matters.

Having said that, the European Union has played a role in education since 1974 (Lowe 1992, 582). This year marks the introduction of a gradual process of co-operation in education (European Commission 1990, 3). The formal basis for this co-operation was a resolution passed by the European Commission in 1971 on co-operation in education (Gretler 1991, 17). In fact, since 1971, more than fifty declarations have been made by the European Commission in relation to education and a European education policy. So it is evident that article 126 did not suddenly appear out of nowhere, but rather was the culmination of a sustained effort to introduce some form of overarching education policy which would allow a degree of convergence on the part of member states in terms of their own education policy. The European Commission (and also the Council of Ministers) have 'long been exerting a massive influence on the education policies of the member states via guidelines, resolutions, recommendations and reports' (Heinemann 1991, 71). There were some important legal developments such as the cases of *Casagrande*, *Gravier* and *Blaizot*, which allowed the European Union to gradually increase its influence over education (Gould 1989; Shaw 1992). The judgements arrived at in these cases provided a legal basis for a reformulation and implementation of community policies in the area of education and resulted in the establishment of education programmes such as ERASMUS, TEMPUS, LINGUA AND COMMETT.

It is significant that all of these positive integration efforts in relation to education were all agreed to by the member states in the mid to late 1980s, more or less simultaneously with the achievement of a consensus regarding the viability of the single market project and 1992. At this stage, education, along with training, was deemed to be an important factor in the progress of European integration, and the Commission's 1989 medium-term guidelines on education and training (European Commission, 1989) expresses this belief, when it decided

> to place education and training at the forefront of its priorities, to spearhead a new community-wide commitment to invest in people, in their skills, their creativity, and their versatility...their emphasis provides an essential bridge between economic and social policies.

Article 126 and the policy of lifelong learning are an extension of this desire to link economics to social policy. What is of interest is that member states, who have for so long jealously guarded their legal competence as regards education, agreed to hand over some of their sovereignty in education matters to the European Union. This was carried out in a similar fashion, and more or less at the same time, as they agreed to relinquish sovereignty in many aspects of economic policy making. The single market project got officially under way in 1985, with the Single European Act (SEA) being signed in 1987. The key here is the timing, as the parallel nature of these two policy changes, educational and economic, is no mere coincidence. The following quote from the White Paper (1995, 30) indirectly acknowledges this;

> let us not forget...that to a greater extent than before, promoting the European dimension in education and training has become a necessity for efficiency in the face of internationalisation and to avoid the risk of a watered-down European society.

The next section will examine this connection between internationalisation, the TEU and the role of education.

International political economy and the European Union

There has always been a political-economic relationship between the process of European integration and the rest of the world, and George (1991, 35) is correct to state that the beginnings of integration back in the 1950s took place in a specific global context. It is only the form which this relationship takes that has changed. As Bornschier (1994, 70) explains, the impetus for the changes brought about by the SEA (and subsequently the TEU) 'came from world political transformations'. Basic knowledge of the world tells us that environmental, technological and cultural systems have undergone rapid transformations in the latter half of the twentieth century. It is changes in the field of economics, however, that have had the most profound impact on the globe, including Europe. These changes began in the early 1970s, and have resulted in the development of a 'qualitatively different world economy' (Thomas 1989, 332). The three major developments of this period, the information telecommunications revolution, the collapse of the Bretton Woods Fixed Exchange Rate Mechanism, and the oil crisis of 1971-72, have led to the rapid expansion of international capital markets, a situation which has been described as 'global capitalism' (Ross and Trachte 1990). It is the multinational corporation (MNC) which has, since the 1970s, come to embody this new era in the history of the world capitalist economy. Putting aside the vast power and wealth of these MNCs for the moment, it is the role of MNCs in expanding international capital mobility that is of most significance for the European Union. This international capital mobility, embodied in multinationals, has led to a situation where today, the world market is characterised by an 'international concentration and centralisation of capital' (Mandel 1972). MNCs, because of their size and wealth, can reap the benefits of large *economies of scale*. The term 'economies of scale' is used generally in economic literature to describe 'the effects of size on costs (Emerson 1988, 126). Put simply, the bigger the company, the better the profit. The fact that multinational firms are comprised of many different sites of production in many different countries, which can specialise in single aspects of the commodity producing process, and can disperse the cost of research and development due to their ability to use the advantages of home nations in particular areas, allows them to increase their output considerably in the production of new technologies.

What this means for states is a move away from nationally centralised capital to a much more disadvantageous situation of internationally centralised capital. Because of the international mobility of capital, national capital is forced to compete with MNCs on an unequal basis, and without similar economies of scale. The importance of the new technologies to the wealth and power of national states means that 'every state will want to maintain a presence in the technology' (Gilpin 1987, 402). But because nationally based firms cannot compete effectively unless they have access to the same kinds of economies of scale, they lose in the technological race. States are usually too small and lack the amount of capital needed in order to build economies of scale sufficient to ensure suitable amounts of profit.

In the face of this change in the international economy, the member states of the European Union realised that they could not 'go it alone'. The Treaty on European Union is ample evidence of this. As Fontaine (1995, 8) puts it;

> all governments, regardless of their political persuasion, now recognise that the era of absolute national sovereignty is gone. Only by joining forces ... can Europe's old nations continue to enjoy the economic and social progress and maintain their influence in the world.

The national governments of each member state agreed to the TEU project because of the competition provided by foreign multinationals. The TEU, and the single market project that generated it, are in essence *political* manoeuvres to create European economies of scale. What is important to note here is that European firms had already attempted to create their own economies of scale (through mergers, joint ventures, take-overs and acquisitions) prior to the single market project of 1985, in order to stay competitive. What is also important to note is that the single market project and the TEU, although they politicise economic relations, have nothing to do with state intervention in the workings of business and capital. Quite the opposite: The whole point of the TEU was to take government out of the economy and the removal of Non -Tariff Barriers (NTBs) was the prime example of this. In essence, the Treaty on European Union is the legal manifestation of compliance by European state governments to the demands of European big business.

Concluding discussion

This compliance on the part of member states to multinational demands, has massive implications for how we view the political nature of education and particularly adult education, in the European Union. The TEU includes article 126 on education, which provided the first proper legal basis for a policy of lifelong learning. As I have shown, the European Union has had an interest in education for quite some time but member states were unwilling to surrender their sovereignty. With the handing over of at least partial sovereignty to the European Union in terms of education, member states have agreed to comply with the *educational* demands of European multinationals. Lifelong learning has been of major interest to European industrialists and it is in the policy of lifelong learning that we see most clearly the connections between education, European capital and state governments. European multinationals, in order to take advantage of their new economies of scale, need a flexible and adaptable workforce. The production of new technologies requires labour which has the ability to rapidly change its skill base in order to keep up with developments in industry. The political decision to foster a policy of lifelong learning is an attempt to provide this education infrastructure to European big business, a policy which is essential if they are to maintain their profit levels.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that the needs of the European capitalist class are the ones being met by lifelong learning. Although I have provided only a brief outline of the issues involved, the argument presented here is a far cry from the ones offered by adult educators who see global or regional transformations as somehow neutral or, worse still, wave the finger at technology as if the new technologies had a mind of their own. It is not these new technologies whose needs are being met or who have set the boundaries for learning in the European Union, but rather the European capitalist class in alliance with state governments. This paper has revealed that these boundaries have been set up in a way which is far from being either politically or economically neutral.

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Policy formulated truths of flexible learning: keeping discourses of adult education 'in play'

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The nature of the adult learning environment in Australia is changing; there are dramatic moves in the characteristics of populations engaging in learning, in the demands and expectations of individuals and client groups, and thus in what it means to provide appropriate courses for adult learners. Within the context of these changes university education for adults in Australia is becoming increasingly accessible and differentiated. These changes bring an increase in off-campus, cross and multi-disciplinary study and a broader range of learning choices for the individual.

Within this environment new discourses of adult education are emerging which seek to justify and theorise changing practices. These foreground ideas of 'flexible delivery' or 'flexible learning'. Emerging practices of flexible learning are thus implicated in a situation where previously accepted pedagogical 'truths' about the teaching and learning of adults are being contested in new ways.

This paper draws particularly on the work of Foucault (1980) and Ball (1990 and 1994) to examine these emerging discourses and practices of flexible learning. It analyses power relations between differing discourses of adult education and policy and ways in which discursive meanings, and thus pedagogical practices, may become 'fixed'. By drawing upon the work of these theorists an argument is put forward that policy may influence discourses of adult education in such a way as to diminish rather than to increase opportunity for adults in the deployment of flexible learning.

The first section of the paper examines ways in which policies may act within discourses of adult education to formulate 'truths' of flexible learning. The second considers ways in which these truths or meanings of may be 'bounded' by and within discourses of policy, policy analysis and adult education in such a way as to diminish opportunities for adult learners. The third section contemplates the ways in which meanings might be kept in discursive 'play' to help prevent the limitations of fixing of meanings and bounding of discourses.

Formulating policy truths of flexible learning

Drawing from Foucault (1980), discourses constitute power-knowledge formations or 'regimes of truth'. Each regime provides its own conceptual grid with its own rules, possibilities, exclusions, erasures, limits and inner logic. Discourses interrelate as a broad network of discursive relations, which are relations of power. Particular discourses can be seen to dominate, powerfully, at particular moments and in particular contexts. These dominant discourses are displaced from time to time as changing practices require new understandings which cannot be adequately legitimised within them. As this occurs, hitherto marginal discourses may come to the fore or be newly constituted.

A focus on policy and its influences allows consideration of the contribution of policy to the exercise of the power by the state. 'Implicit in the question of the restructuring of education, then, is the question of how the state exercises and imposes its power in part through the *production* of 'truth' and 'knowledge' about education' (Donald, quoted in Ball 1990a, 17). Thus, policy can be said to produce 'truths' of flexible learning — policies insert themselves authoritatively within discourses and present flexible learning as an *a priori* object within them. In the process, they conceal the 'invention' of flexible learning and their part in the construction of the meanings attributed to it; 'Discourses are not about objects; they do not identify objects, they constitute them and in the practice of doing so conceal their own invention' (Foucault, quoted in Ball, S., 1990a, 17).

Policies operate as power-knowledge formations and are constitutive of the regimes of truth in which they seek to justify particular practices over others. Policy, however, is itself formulated within the very network of power relations which it seeks to influence. Therefore power cannot be seen to simply reside in policy and be exercised directly upon society through policy implementation: 'Policies typically posit a restructuring, redistribution and disruption of power relations, so that different people can and cannot do different things ... policy texts *enter* rather than simply change power relations' (Ball 1994a, 20). Policies thus both constrain and bring about agency and must therefore be understood in terms of the changing relations between these effects and their 'interpenetration'.

Policies are 'statements which...have a distinctive and formal purpose...to codify and publicise the values which are to inform future practice and thus encapsulate prescriptions for reform' (Ranson 1994, 440). However, discourses pre-existent within the social formation share particular values which bring about the identification of particular problems as problems which require resolution (Scheurich 1994). Therefore, although discourses may view problems and their solutions differently, 'powerful 'grids' or networks of regularities ...that are constitutive of the emergence or social constitution of a particular problem as a social problem' (Scheurich 1994, 301) can be seen to exist. Policy problems and solutions are thus constituted within the context of these pre-existent discursive regularities. Problems and their solutions are 'bounded' by regularities of discourse which are translated into policy strategies for change and deployed vertically within the system structure.

Many universities in Australia which have traditionally focused on on-campus and discipline based courses are now reformulating and diversifying modes of delivery and content of course offerings. Within this environment forms of learning which were not previously central are increasingly brought to the fore. These forms of learning are variously named, for example, 'distance', 'open', 'multi-mode' or 'flexible' (Evans 1995; Taylor 1995). However, both 'flexibility' and 'flexible learning' seem to be used increasingly in relation to the kinds of reformulations of course offerings that are taking place. Such changes seem often to be driven through institution wide administrative reformation and accompanied by the use of the languages of 'technologisation', 'marketisation' and managerialism.

> Nowadays, every university seems to have a toehold on an educational future with computer and communications technologies, 'Diversity', 'choice' and 'flexibility' are the watchwords; no 'Quality' university can be without them. From young first-year undergraduates through to final year PhDs, a 'Quality' university offers diverse curricula and flexible approaches to teaching, learning and supervision. (Evans 1995, 23)

These changes can be seen, in part, as responses to, or as effects of, an 'ensemble' of government policies intending to bring about such changes (Jakupec and Nicoll 1994a and b, Johnson 1996; Nicoll 1996). This policy ensemble instigated strategies of reformation and control which included competition between universities through funding tied to Quality Reviews (1993 and 1994), competitive research and development (CAUT) grants for innovative teaching and learning initiatives (Evans 1995), and the creation of Open Learning Australia as a broker of university distance learning (Taylor 1995).

The benefits of distance learning practices within the earlier 'Dawkins era' of governance had been tied within policy documents to discourses of liberal democracy and economic rationalism, supportive of the then expansion and government control of formal distance education provisions and as a tool to vocationalise the tertiary sector and improve and broaden the skill base of the population. Distance education was put forward as a mechanism for the achievement of economic growth and social equity. Later, such policy moves towards a more flexible provision were supported through notions of the fundamental rights of individuals within society to access learning, and to choose those learning options which best satisfy their needs. The languages used resonated with contemporary humanistic discourses of education, emphasising the value of individual choice and autonomy, and a learner-centred rather than teacher-centred focus.

Although such policies might present flexible learning as an object or 'fact' within discourses (Nicoll 1996) and so constitute a metaphor suggestive of a capability to address particular commonly accepted social problems, this strategy can only exert pressure upon individuals within local sites to act in particular ways and does not belie individual agency. However, by drawing upon particular discourses certain true/false distinctions are prescribed which can resonate with those accepted by certain groups operating within certain regimes of truth, and at particular sites. This can help create the discursive conditions to support particular re-distributions of power and bring about certain kinds of actions.

Therefore although policy can be seen to operate within discursive formations with the intention of bringing about certain effects, effects cannot be simply assumed from intentions nor policy seen simply as the source of power. Policy is decentred — a point in a network or matrix of power. For policy effects to be identified they must therefore be sought empirically within particular sites of practice at different levels within the system structure, through analyses of the changing discourses of those who respond within these locations and as 'the impact of these changes on patterns of social access, opportunity and social justice' (Ball 1994a, 25-6). However, for an *understanding* of such discursive effects, the boundaries between pre-existent discourses, their overlappings, regularities of meanings, and ways in these which discourses and regularities may be positioned powerfully or marginalised, are important — for those who speak it, a discourse is a given, it operates 'behind the backs', it is not itself questioned although it is the means by which questions are asked (Nicoll and Edwards, forthcoming).

The following section aims to contribute to such understanding of policy effects by considering the way in which particular discourses of policy, policy analysis and adult education dominate and are 'bounded' as regimes of truth, and thus the ways in which 'flexible learning' may become constituted as truth within them. It examines ways in which such bounding of discourses and constitution of flexible learning may give rise to certain possibilities for adult learners while in the process exclude others.

The 'bounding' of discourses of flexible learning in adult education

Policy analysis is seen here as one particular grouping of discourses within adult education with a specific role or aim in the formation and interpretation of policy meanings. Policy analysis has therefore an explicit role in the production and reproduction of meanings of flexible learning within discourses of policy and adult education. The dominance of particular discourses within both policy texts and policy analysis is seen to produce meanings within certain discursive boundaries and so to limit the work of educators, analysts and policy makers in particular ways (Ball 1994b; Jakupec and Nicoll 1994c; Kenway 1990; Marshall and Anderson 1994; Peters and Marshall 1996; Scheurich 1994; Seddon 1996).

Traditional, 'positivist', policy analysis is not seen to be sufficient to disrupt the maintenance of the particular relations of power which are pre-existent within the social formation (Marshall and Anderson 1994) and which reproduce the status quo; 'You cannot dismantle the master's house using the master's tools' (Lorde 1984, quoted in Marshall and Anderson 1994, 176). Alternative approaches, aiming to disrupt this status quo, emphasise structural conflict, domination/emancipation and agency. However, Scheurich (1994) suggests that while these alternatives claim to conceptualise policy activities differently, they are also constituted within the dominant liberal discourse which *itself* maintains the pre-existing social order—within liberal discourse 'free-enterprise democracies are the best, though not perfect, societies' (299).

Traditional policy analysis maintains social order by aiming to improve what is already existing through 'analysing and understanding its problems and discovering and devising the best solutions or, at least, ameliorisations' (Scheurich 1994, 299). Alternative methodologies are seen to do the same by aiming to 'symbolise 'latent public concerns'' (299) which are conceived in response to the dominant discourse of liberal democracy. The implicit purpose (or effect), therefore, of alternative policy analysis is that of 'maintaining or restabilising the social order that might have been threatened if the 'latent concerns' were not given voice through policies' (299).

Ball (1994b) sheds further light on discursive mechanisms through which this latter voicing of 'latent concerns' might serve to maintain social order. His focus is particularly on the totalising effects of the language of Marxist discourses through use of 'the dominance-resistance binary'. Marxist policy discourse constrains the possibilities of discourse within the categories that it sets up for analysis — within its binaries. Thus, by focusing on resistance, its opposite, dominance, is powerfully constituted and reinforced. Even though Marxist discourses aim to overcome inequities and social injustice, events outside their categories and binaries cannot be easily examined and thus discourses of dominance are revalidated through them. Ball (1994b, 176-7), drawing on Scheurich, argues for a third and 'open-ended' discursive space which might be called, with irony, 'chaos' or 'chaos freedom' which is everything that occurs outside the 'spartan dualism' of the binaries and through which further meanings might emerge.

The continuation of educational inequities despite the fact that equity has been an explicit policy value in education over a number of years is put forward as an illustration of a situation of status quo in respect to which policy and policy analysis has been unable to adequately deal (Marshall and Anderson 1994; Scheurich 1994). However, rather than viewing the values of equity, and, related to this, choice, as significations within policy discourse of potential for change, they may be more usefully regarded as pre-existing discursive regularities, or as indicative of 'the vertical use of rhetoric to control meaning by condensing it within a governing metaphor' (Yeatman 1994, 112). As such metaphors, 'equity' and 'choice' act to mark and maintain the social acceptability of a boundary between those who are included in formal institutional learning and those who are not. They do so by indicating a *policy intention* of change and the exclusion of individuals *who have chosen* to be so excluded. These indications mask the interests served through the maintenance of the boundaries of exclusion and inclusion in the position in which they already exist within the social formation.

As discursive regularities, 'equity' and 'choice' exist within a broad discourse of liberal democracy which operates powerfully across dominant discourses of policy, policy analysis and adult education within the contemporary moment. Contemporary notions of democracy depend an idea of equality within a context of the individual an 'autonomous' agent, free from social constraint. Thus it is that a liberal non-interventionist politics of choice is acceptable (Yeatman 1994). Therefore, when viewed as discursive regularities, equity and choice are unable to be seen differently through discourses because they are pre-formed as particular social problems within them — the language of the discourses themselves constitutes these problems and then constrains the ways in which they can be thought about.

It would seem that without alternative discourses or some attention to critical analysis within and between existent discourses, flexible learning may merely serve to maintain the inequities typical of contemporary education systems within liberal democracies. The bounding of discourses of policy, policy analysis and adult education within that of liberal democracy, and with the binaries it sets up, ensures that relations of power are held. This 'regime of truth' creates a network of discursive regularities and metaphor which serve to marginalise and negate alternative possibilities — such alternatives as might seek to foreground the problems of inequity and choice in more useful ways. If flexible learning is to disrupt such status quo, then the problematics of a liberal democratic discourse *itself* must be brought into the public arena for debate.

Flexible learning may therefore be one of those 'structures for open deliberation in public spheres [which] can become mechanisms that mask domination' (Marshall and Anderson 1994, 179). A dominant liberal discourse emphasising equity and choice within a framework of individualism binds flexible learning within a rhetorical complex which serves to further empower the already powerful. Flexible learning thus acts within an ensemble of contemporary policies directed to the restructuring of education to support the 'marketisation' and 'vocationalisation' of education, to reinforce discourses of liberalism and maintain the structures of inequity created through them. In so doing flexible learning becomes bound up in the diminishing of educational opportunity rather than in its expansion, through a redefinition of the boundaries of adult education. With this redefinition there is an increasing focus on education for work and inclusion of vocational groups and individuals who have money to pay — individuals who seek other forms of education or have no money become increasingly excluded. Not only are the existing inequities and lack of choice for specific marginalised individuals and groups within society maintained, but new ones are constituted.

Crossing borders, breaking boundaries through the 'play' of discursive meaning

Although the dominance of particular discourses, metaphors and networks of regularities produce meanings which set boundaries, fix meanings and limit the work of educators in particular ways, the emergence of flexible learning can be seen as an opportunity to break such boundaries, 'open' meanings and thus cross borders of practice by constituting new possibilities. Foucault (1980) is clear that power is not only repressive but is, equally, productive.

Modernity, and modern policy analysis, has hitherto told stories of 'enclosure' and so attempted to provide a world that could be 'mastered' (Usher and Edwards 1994). The fear upon which these stories are based is that without closure social order will be impossible. The discourses available to politicians, policy analysts and adult educators have been those within which flexible learning is constituted as a force to improve or maintain social order within a context of changing social conditions. However, by imposing such closure on meanings, subjectivities and boundaries are fixed in particular ways so as to fix also their effects of inclusion and exclusion. Although one is always in a sense "in'closure' in that one's very thoughts and language necessitates the making of distinctions, hierarchies, inclusions and exclusions, one does not need to seek the one story 'that places us permanently inside closure' (Usher and Edwards 1994, 147). With acknowledgement of the social construction of meanings and absence of the self-present subjectivity (a 'presence' unmediated by the social), 'the play of *différance* — Derrida's term both for the differing (the 'play of difference') and deferral (the 'postponement') of meaning — comes into play' (145). Allowing for the play of difference in meanings of flexible learning means examining the different possibilities and postponing the fixing of meanings — keeping meanings of flexible learning 'in play'. In so doing, discursively related regularities of meanings, governing metaphor and discursive boundaries are constantly unsettled through questioning and doubt.

Through a constant process of questioning and doubt the complexities and inequalities of social life are not allowed to be reduced to that which can be conceptualised within the binary (Ball 1994b). Through neither complete acceptance of nor resistance to emergent 'truths' of flexible learning what has been called a third 'open-ended' discursive space, or 'chaos freedom' (Scheurich 1994, 25), becomes visible. Chaos freedom, as everything that happens that is neither dominance or resistance, is enabled to emerge discursively through languages and practices of flexible learning, thus also keeping the boundaries of discourses of adult education in play — by opening meanings new possibilities of practice are constituted.

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The dream drives the action: transformative education for our times

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One of the tasks of anyone who claims to be an educator is that they first 'find their place in history' before they decide what education is about. If there was ever a time in recent history where the understanding of historical context was necessary for doing education, our historical moment is certainly that time. My first attempt at answering the question of what time is it is by indicating the importance of the terminal decade of this 20th century. We will shortly call ourselves creatures of the 21st century. Just by being in the terminal decade of the 20th century makes these final years important to posterity just as the terminal decade of the 19th century was for people entering into the twentieth century. There is a Chinese saying that is considered both a curse and a blessing 'may you live in interesting times'. In the terminal decade of the 20th century, we certainly have the legacy of living in interesting times. It is my contention that in this decade, we no longer have the luxury of the optimism of the previous decades. We are living in a period that appears to be the end of something of the order of magnitude that we do not fully realise.

My first way of establishing the importance of our own final decade is by going back to the final decade of the 19th century as a point of comparison and frame of reference. My focus will centre on life in North America and specifically using the American cultural historian Henry Adams' reflections at the turn of the 19th century. In a book entitled *The Education of Henry Adams*, one finds a series of reflective essays (Adams 1931). The essay entitled *The Dynamo and the Virgin* will occupy us here. In this essay Adams does some reflection on our Western culture's entry into the 20th century by making some comparison with some of the achievements of the medieval world. He is interested in the focal point of energy and dynamism which inspires a culture's creativity. Adams uses the figure of the Blessed Virgin as the focal point of the creativity of the medieval world synthesis. This energy inspired such monuments of that period such as Le Mont St. Michel and the Cathedral of Chartres. Henry Adams, who was a nostalgic medievalist, compares these monuments to the one of the symbols that would occupy the century that he was coming into being which was the 20th century. Adams chose the symbol of the 'Dynamo' which was being exhibited at the Worlds Fair at this time. The 'Dynamo' represented the perpetual motion machine; a machine that was expected to operate without entropy or shutdown. It reflected the desire to have industrial production around the clock. Adams also reflected on the ethos of the beginning of the 20th century and observed that it was extremely optimistic where one could witness incredible faith in human powers which was not evident in the medieval world synthesis. Coming into our century, there was a deep and abiding faith in the human intellect, technology and the powers of modern science. Thus, where western culture is concerned, there was an incredible belief and optimism in the forward movement of history. The idea of progress became pre-eminent and human enhancement seemed virtually assured by the powers of the intellect allied with the technology of the machine. There was a sense of great expectations.

Now let us look again at the terminal decade of the 20th century. In contrast to the grand optimism of the terminal decade of the 19th century, we are living in a decade of conflicting voices and visions. There are optimists and pessimists. It is being called the age of the 'new global economic' order. These are voices of the transnational businesses (Barnet and Cavanagh 1994). From these voices we hear the necessity of competing in the market place of this new global world. We are encouraged to move into this world at a rapid pace and do so competitively. That there is a new global economic order that is being created by the multinational businesses there is no doubt.

In contrast to this optimism, there are also voices of stark pessimism that are being heard at this time. Robert D. Kaplan in a much discussed article in the *Atlantic Monthly* looks at our decade and sees the 'coming anarchy'. He is using the term anarchy in an extremely pejorative sense. He tries to demonstrate in his article how scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of the planet. A similar type of pessimism is held by McKibben (1989) whose emphasis focuses on ecological disaster. The title of his book is *The End of Nature*. After you read it you will not be surprised at the ominous nature of the title of the book.

In looking at these conflicting type scenarios Paul Kennedy in his book *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*, takes stock:

> Many earlier attempts to peer into the future

> concluded either in a tone of unrestrained optimism, or gloomy forebodings, (or in Toynbee's case) in appeals for spiritual renewal. Perhaps this work should finish on such a note. Yet the fact remains that simply because we do not know the future, it is impossible to say with certainty whether global trends will lead to terrible disasters or be diverted by astonishing advances in human adaptation. What is clear is that as the cold war fades away, we face not a 'new world order' but a troubled fractured planet; whose problems deserve the serious attention of politicians and publics alike. (Kennedy 1993, 348-349)

Thus a sober appraisal of our terminal decade leads to no facile conclusions for the future. The Chinese character 'ji' is the symbol for both danger and opportunity.

The need to chose between visions

I would like to venture the thesis that it is the fundamental educational task of our times to make the choice for a sustainable global-planetary habitat of interdependent life forms over and against the pathos of the global competitive marketplace. This choice can also be called a *transformative* perspective because it posits a radical restructuring of all current educational directions. To move toward a global planetary education, it will be necessary to have a functional cosmology that is in line with the vision of where this education will be leading us. We are at another vast turning point and we are in need of a cosmological story that can carry the weight of a planetary consciousness into which we are now moving. We are now living in a watershed period comparable to the major shift that took place from the medieval into the modern world. The educational framework appropriate for this movement must be visionary and transformative and clearly must go beyond our conventional educational outlooks that we have cultivated for several centuries.

Contemporary education in all Western societies lacks a comprehensive cosmology. When contemporary education has drawn from the sciences, its attention has been directed to the social sciences as distinguished from the natural sciences. In most cases, educational theory and practice has borrowed from the sciences of psychology, sociology and to a lesser extent anthropology. What is totally lacking in modern educational theory is a comprehensive and integrated perspective that was in the past identified as a cosmology. Thus, contemporary educational theory and practice carry with it the same blinders that have plagued modern scientific specialisation coming out of the post-Newtonian period. To be sure, modern western educational thought has attempted to identify itself with humanism but it has done so without providing a renewal of an acceptable cosmology. What we are working toward is an articulation and presentation of a cosmology that can be functionally effective in providing a basis for an educational program that would engender an ecologically sustainable vision of society in the broadest terms; a planetary vision. This new cosmology, at its mythic and visionary level, could initiate and guide the new order of Earth's existence into an emerging Ecozoic era. We are now at the end of the Cenozoic Era of the planet Earth's 4.5 billion year history. Now however, this era is rapidly ending. Not only the human, but even more so, the functioning of the entire planet is being altered. All these are being altered in the most extensive transformation that has taken place on the planet earth in the last 65 million years. So extensive is the dissolution of the life systems of the earth during the past century that the viability of the human can no longer be taken for granted.

The long-term survival of our species, and of other species that share our living planet, depends on understanding the depth of what is happening to the planet at present. It is essential to admit that what is occurring is nothing less than biocide. It also depends on rekindling a relationship between the human and the natural world that is far beyond the exploitative relationships of our current industrial mode. A different kind of prosperity and progress needs to be envisioned which embraces the whole life community. All our human institutions, professions, all our programs and activities need to function now in this wider life community context.

I would say that all of these moments, in their totality, can be called a 'transformative moment'. It is a historical moment of moving between visions. It is not the case that historical moments and their labelling go uncontested. Many would say that we are not at a transitional moment in our present historical situation as I am maintaining. Truly, we seem to be living in a time of ferment. For example, there is incredible cultural hyperactivity directing us toward the 'global competitive market place'. Both in Canada and the United States we have witnessed this in the decade of the 1980s. Now in the 1990s the educational systems in our Northern hemisphere have been the object of educational reform that is, in essence, a massively conservative endeavour. Aronowitz and Giroux give us a graphic summation of this moment in their description of education in a US context:

> During these years, the meaning and purpose of schooling at all levels of education were refashioned around the principles of the marketplace and the logic of rampant individualism. Ideologically, this meant abstracting schools from the language of democracy and equity while simultaneously organising educational reform around the discourse of choice,

> reprivatisation, and individual competition. (Aranowitz and Giroux 1993, 1)

I would add that there is a total absence and autism to almost every aspect of environmental sensitivity that constitutes the fundamental underpinning of the recent concerns of the environmental movement. In this most recent version of 'conservative reform', there is no questioning of the 'functional appropriateness' of the dominant vision of the global marketplace in virtually any of its aspects. When there is criticism within these quarters, it is a criticism that is completely at home with the dominant cultural form that seeks a further extension of what has been in place since the beginning of the twentieth century; the dominance of the market. The educational reform suggested in this venue continues to encourage us to tool up our educational institutions from the nation state market to the transnational marketplace.

The 'transformative vision' contests and repudiates the viability of the global marketplace as it is currently being formulated within the transnational economic order. It is my view that this global marketplace vision cannot be a viable cultural planetary vision for the future. Here the current resurgence of the 'terminal cenozoic' is seen in the educational reform criticism of the global competitive marketeers. In contrast to this vision, I am attempting to pursue a transformative planetary vision as an alternative to the global market vision.

To embark upon a discussion of a transformative vision of education, it must be kept clearly in mind that it will involve a diversity of elements and movements in contemporary education. At this point in our treatment I will try to indicate some of the contemporary educational currents that must be part of an emergent vision of transformative education. Since we are in a transitional period, in which there are many contesting viewpoints, the reader should be appraised that some of the elements are emerging into what I am calling a transformative vision. To some extent these trends are operating somewhat separately and independently of one another. What I would like to do here is to name some of those elements because I think they will form part of a weave of a new type of integral education that will contest the vision of education for the global market place. What is important, at this point in our treatment, is to name some of those elements that are potentially moving toward a more integral transformative vision. I would then like to couch these elements within a broad cosmological framework which I believe will be my major contribution to the effort of offering an alternative to our present conventions in education.

The educational field of 'critical pedagogy' is one of the emergent educational forums that attempts to deal with the broad area of social justice issues that are embedded in inequities of power and resources along the lines of class race and gender. In my own work, *Critical Psychology and Critical Pedagogy* (O'Sullivan 1984, 1990), I attempt to show how these structures operate in educational contexts in areas such as school learning and popular movement education. The work in this area covers vital social justice concerns dealing with post-colonial and anti-racist education, (Dei 1995), class analysis, gender inequity (hooks 1994, Hart 1995, O'Sullivan 1990). There is a development of resistance education (also called counter- hegemonic education) based on the work of Antonio Gramsci, Freire, Habermas, bell hooks and others (Aronowitz and Giroux 1991, Freire 1974, hooks 1994, O'Sullivan 1990).

There are also some similar trends of a critical standpoint that are presently being formulated in the area of adult education. A compilation of these trends in adult education can be found in Michael Welton's edited *In Defence of the Life World: Critical Perspectives on Adult Learning*, and Paul Wangoola and Frank Youngman's edited *Toward a Transformative Political Economy of Adult Education*. What we see in these newer critical currents is a questioning of the vision of the global market place, gender and class iniquity, and post-colonial perspectives that question the dominance of western cultural hegemony. There is a criticism of mainstream adult education, at the level of paradigm, from the point of view of critical social theory and it can be found in the works of Jack Mezirow (1995), Michael Welton (1995), Mechhthild Hart (1995) and Michael Collins (1991).

Probably one of the most prominent omissions in the critical pedagogical approaches to education at this juncture of its formulations is its lack of attention to ecological issues. My major criticism of critical perspectives is their pre-eminent emphasis on inter-human problems frequently to the detriment of the relations of humans to the wider biotic community and the natural world. The general direction of critical perspectives is toward anthropocentrism. The criticism of anthropocentrism is by no means a reason for dismissal of the vital concerns that critical perspectives pose for contemporary education. These issues must be taken forward and fused into wider biocentric concerns.

Holistic education is another emergent trend in education which challenges the fragmentation of modernism that comes to us under a scientific analytical and instrumentally rational world view. Jack Miller (1996), one of the major architects of holistic education in North America, signals some of the features of holism in his introductory comments to the topic in *The Holistic Curriculum*:

> Holistic education attempts to bring education into alignment with the fundamental realities of nature. Nature at its core is interrelated and

> dynamic. We can see this dynamism and connectedness in the atom, organic systems, the biosphere, and the universe itself. Unfortunately, the human world since the Industrial Revolution has stressed compartmentalisation and standardisation. The result has been the fragmentation of life.

Holistic educators are also very critical of the instrumental technocratic emphasis of contemporary education to the exclusion of very core aspects of life such as creativity and spirituality. Declining to identify themselves within a religious framework, there have been several current treatments of education which have identified spirituality as a core feature for all educational endeavours (Moffett 1994). In criticising the shallow rationalism and value neutral nature of modernist education, holistic educators attempt to root education in a ethical framework that attempts to go beyond the broken surface of our lives today to a hidden wholeness. In this type of education, the intellect and spirit are integral to one another.

As with critical pedagogy, holistic educators are sharply critical of modernist education but they are so for very different reasons. My own conclusion is that they complement one another and should be allied with one another. Attempting to make this alignment will be another goal of an expanded and integral transformative education.

Finally, an emergent area labelled 'global education' deserves mention. Here I am speaking of global perspectives that prepare us for the global market place. Global education perspectives that carry a planetary consciousness are the perspectives that I am identifying here. The approaches to global education that I am speaking of here bear the closest resemblance to what I am calling transformative education, in that they wed a holistic education to a planetary consciousness while maintaining a critical perspective. There are numerous instances. Budd Hall and I have done some preliminary work in the area of adult education attempting to articulate a transformative vision for the field of adult education (Hall and O'Sullivan 1995). There is the work of Pike and Selby (1988) in their groundbreaking work in global education. The pioneering of Thomas Lyons (1996) at the Ontario Teachers Federation is another example. Working with teachers in the Province of Ontario, Lyons has articulated an educational vision that takes into consideration a broad cosmological perspective and combines it with an integral vision of education that includes global planetary concepts, social justice and human rights sensitivities, peace perspectives and environmental concerns.

Transformative vision: planetary consciousness and the necessity of a cosmological context

Modern western culture is probably the first culture to attempt to function without an overriding view of the cosmos. There has been a disenchantment with a cosmological context that has developed in modern western thinking. Frequently, from our western point of view, we have labelled cultures retrograde for having a larger cosmology embedded in their mythic structures. Most of the social sciences at the end of the last century labelled peoples with mythic interpretations of the universe as primitive. This served more than one purpose. From a scientific point of view, it established western scientific thinking as superior to the thinking of other existing cultures. The label of primitive also gave European cultures an excuse and apology for their imperialism and colonialism (Said 1993).

We are now living in a watershed period comparable, if not even more dramatic, to the major shift that took place from the medieval into the modern world. We are in a transition from the modernism to a postmodern world-view whose characteristics we only vaguely see at this point. We are calling this postmodern perspective the ecozoic period. The educational framework appropriate for movement into this period must be visionary and transformative and clearly must go beyond our conventional educational outlooks that we have cultivated for several centuries. It is understood that anything approaching a 'grand narrative' will be held with more than a modicum of suspicion. The postmodern critique of 'grand narratives' appears not only suspicious of past narratives but is also, in its deconstructive moment, suspicious of suggested 'grand narratives' for the future. This type of critique exposes us to the inherent ethical dangers that are potentially in any new large vision including the one that I will be venturing in here. Nevertheless, there are compelling reasons to attempt what David Griffin (1990) calls a reconstructive postmodern vision. In light of the destructive consequences of the grand narrative of global market place, it is necessary to proceed, with all due caution, with a vision that is comprehensive in scope and magnitude, to counter the destructive totalising monological system of the market vision. But that is not the whole story for venturing a new vision. As the philosopher Arran Gare articulates:

> ... it is not enough to defend a new cosmology in opposition to the cosmology that has underpinned modernity. It is necessary to articulate this in such a way that it can effectively challenge the hegemonic culture, so that it can orient people in practice, in their daily lives, to create an environmentally sustainable civilisation. To do this it will be necessary to a new grand narrative, a grand narrative formulated in terms of the cosmology based on a philosophy of project. (Gare 1995, 139)

When Gare uses project, I equate it with my meaning of transformative vision. Gare further points out the paradox that has resulted from our loss of faith in grand narratives, and all narratives to some extent. What has been revealed in this loss of faith is the importance of narratives for the constitution of subjects, social organisations and societies. These narratives, even in their demise, show how we only know what to do when we know what story or stories we find ourselves a part of. Following from this underpinning, to know what to do about the environmental crisis requires the creation of stories which individuals can take up and participate and reveal to them why there are the problems at this moment and how they arose and how they can be resolved and what role individuals can play in resolving them. Personal and bio-regional stories will be necessary but not sufficient. Given the present momentum of the global transnational competitive vision, more will be required. We need stories of sufficient power and complexity to orient people for effective action to overcome environmental problems, to address the multiple problems presented by environmental destruction, to reveal what are the possibilities there are for transforming these and to reveal to people the role that they can play in this project. The scope and magnitude for such a project cannot be underestimated:

> In order for such stories to 'work', to inspire people to take them seriously, to define their lives in terms of them, and to live accordingly, such stories must be able to confront and interpret the stories by which people are at present defining themselves and choosing how to live in an environmentally destructive way. It is also important to reveal how power operates, and show why those individuals are concerned about the global environmental crisis are unable effectively to relate their own lives to such problems. The new grand narrative must enable people to understand the relationship between the stories to which they define themselves as individuals and the stories by which groups constitute themselves and define their goals, ranging from families, local communities, organisations and discursive formations, to nations, international organisations and humanity as a whole. (Gare 1995, 140)

This vision of education will need a transformed dream structure; a dream or vision taking us well beyond the global-marketplace dream. *The dream drives the action.*

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Workers as learners and learners as workers: exploring the boundaries of workplace learning

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This paper draws upon several years of fieldwork in London (1995-7) and previous research on a national workplace learning research project (1991-93), talking to employers and employees about the changing skill requirements of work organisations and the learning projects undertaken by employees. A number of professional articles have been published (Payne 1993a and 1996b) which draw on this material. More substantial publications have begun to explore relations between the field of Employee Development and wider changes in the workplace (Forrester, Payne and Ward 1995a and b).

My particular contribution to this work has been to begin an exploration of theoretical aspects of workplace learning in the context of the sociology of reflexive modernity (Forrester and Payne 1995; Payne 1993b and 1996a). The present paper seeks to develop further the theoretical analysis of the data. The debate around workplace learning is seen as an aspect of reflexive modernisation (Beck, Giddens and Lash 1994). A number of themes are common to these writers:

- the globalisation of economic activity and risk
- the loss of traditional meaning-making structures within which people could understand and, to a certain extent, plan their lives
- the individualisation of modern life.

There is a movement between individual experience and action and social theory, which will be adumbrated in subsequent sections of the paper.

Thus, for example, globalisation is not an 'out there' phenomenon but one which affects the daily lives of individuals, whatever part of the globe they live in. Most noticeably, movements of capital within the global capitalist economy affect job opportunities and life chances at a local level. Giddens (1990, 21) defines this 'disembedding' as 'the 'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space'. It is this reconstituted, compressed and complex time-space which constitutes the diverse contexts in which both private and public affairs take place.

Traditional structures, such as the notion of an end-on education and training system which equips young people for a lifetime of work are found to be inadequate; lifelong learning becomes the preferred policy response to this phenomenon (DfEE 1996). The distinction between the economic and the cultural is no longer clear-cut: access to what Lash describes as 'information and communication structures' come to determine life-chances:

> These information and communication structures, which stretch across broad areas of space and compress time, contain not just informational signs but also images, narratives and sounds — that is, aesthetic or hermeneutic signs. These not social but effectively cultural structures are the condition of reflexivity for late modern social agents. They are the condition for highly reflexive production in the workplace ... Access to such information and communication structures — which are unequally distributed both spatially and socially — is an increasingly central factor in social inequalities of class, race and gender in today's world. (Lash 1994, 213)

The conditions of reflexive modernity

I have discussed elsewhere the changing nature of skill requirements in the workplace (Forrester et al 1995a). There are contradictory processes at work, led by the pervasive introduction of information technology into the workplace. On the one hand traditional skilled jobs are replaced by the 'multi-skilled' worker able and willing to operate across a range of skills (the breakdown of traditional job demarcations is crucial here). On the other hand traditional unskilled jobs continue to disappear as information flow and exchange becomes a dominant factor in production. Lash refers to the three paradigmatic classes of reflexive modernity:

> 1. The post-industrial middle-class working in information and communication structures
> 2. The upgraded working-class
> 3. The excluded third who constitute an 'underclass' dependent on benefits or on low-paid, part-time and insecure jobs.
>
> (Lash 1994, 130)

Lash describes groups one and two as 'reflexive winners' and group three as 'reflexive losers'.

At a societal level, both enterprises and governments use education and training to reposition themselves in relation to national and global markets. In other words, individual lifelong learners, learning organisations and the learning society are all implicated in globalisation processes. At an individual level, social actors use education and training to reposition themselves in response to cultural and economic globalisation. Equally, they are positioned and repositioned by education and training systems, including guidance. The 'self' becomes 'a reflexive project' (Giddens 1991, 32). As Edwards and Payne argue in a forthcoming article:

> Selves are no longer bounded by traditions, but become subject to self-monitoring, innovation and change. The self and self-identity become a focus for development. In the contemporary period, this reflexivity is radicalised by the amount of information available, the media through which it is constituted and disseminated and the range of options over which certain choices can and indeed have to be made. Self-identity therefore becomes conditional upon choices of lifestyles. However, the very reflexivity upon which it is suggested modernity is grounded means that the choices confronting people are themselves ambiguous and insecure. There is too much information and there are too many choices. In the condition of late modernity therefore, the options available are many and puzzling making life planning an integral component of existence. They necessitate taking risks yet demand trust in others and ourselves. We require experts and expertise to help us mediate the choices. (Edwards and Payne 1997)

Reflexivity can thus be seen to encompass both personal and social experience. The risks inherent in individual lives in reflexive modernity reflect the globalisation of risk at the social level. Beck (1992) describes the ways in which, for example, environmental risk does not respect national borders. He maintains that in some senses this makes analysis of life-chances based on class positions redundant. Yet there is an important contradiction in his thinking here, for he also argues that while risk is generalised, there is also inequality of risk: '... like wealth, risks adhere to the class pattern, only inversely: wealth accumulates at the top, risks at the bottom' (Beck 1992, 35). Giddens further reflects that 'class divisions and other fundamental lines of inequality, such as those connected with gender or ethnicity, can be partly defined in terms of differential access to forms of self-actualisation and empowerment ... Modernity, one should not forget, produces difference, exclusion and marginalisation' (Giddens 1991, 6).

Learning in the workplace

If at one level, modernity turns its back on tradition, at another level there are important processes of 'reflexive traditionalisation' (Lash 1994, 126) which represent new attempts to reconstitute the social and communitarian in the late modern world. For example, the role of trade unions in defending clearly defined class interests of workers against employers is not only difficult to sustain because of the legal constraints imposed on trade unions by successive UK governments, but also because trade unions no longer represent a single class interest. There is a loosening of traditional class identities and employees and employers make common interest in arguing for particular patterns of investment or governmental support. Work Councils may be seen as epitomising this trend. This tendency for trade unions to find new roles is also reflected in their commitment to an extension of education and training in the workplace (Forrester 1995).

Employee Development schemes, which seek to promote workplace learning beyond the narrowly defined business interests of the firm (Forrester, Payne and Ward 1995), are another important example of reflexive traditionalisation. While the interests of employees and employers are not identical, they exist in a symbiotic relationship to one another (Payne 1996a) which recognises the stake that employees have in a firm alongside the stakes of managers and shareholders. The point can, of course, be overstated: many firms still operate in ways which differentiate clearly between the interests of labour and capital. However, the trend is clear: information-rich production processes require employees who can operate in increasingly autonomous ways. This requires trust, and such commitment on the part of the workforce can only be achieved if there is a sense of common purpose in the workplace. A new theory of learning in the workplace must thus take account not only of disembedding processes such as globalisation and individualisation, but also of processes of reflexive traditionalisation which mark a new stage of capitalist development.

There is differentiation in adult learning theory between competing paradigms of 'personal development', 'community development' and 'vocational training'. The discourse of adult learning often disguises the fact that both policy initiatives and practitioner responses implicitly foreground one paradigm or other of adult learning. The assumption is that each paradigm reflects the interests of one part of the social formation. What will be argued in the remainder of this paper is that such compartmentalisation is frequently dysfunctional for individual learners, for enterprises and for overall government policy. An inclusive policy based on an inclusive theory of adult learning would reflect the dynamic of social and economic change, the complex existence of social actors at the interface of lifeworld and systems world (Welton 1995) and the process of reflexive traditionalisation which exists alongside globalisation and individualisation. There is ambivalence at all levels, but that should not be an excuse for not being reflexively conscious and explicit about adult learning.

The case of National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) is instructive here. At the policy level, they are an attempt to direct adult learning at the narrowly defined business requirements of industry. In a car components manufacturing firm in the

South London Training and Enterprise Council (SOLOTEC) cohort (see endnote), NVQs have been introduced on the shopfloor to take account of the changed role of semi-skilled production workers, particularly the introduction of numerically controlled machines. This is Lash's (1994) 'upgraded working class'. But there are other aspects of NVQ which can be seen as benefiting members of the 'excluded third' who work in low paid jobs in the personal care sector of the economy. For them, NVQs begin to recognise skill elements in inter-personal care relationships in a way which challenge assumptions about both the value of particular jobs and the definitions of 'skill' inherited from an industrial society. 'For the first time in my life, I feel I'm doing a proper job', as a primary school classroom assistant said to me recently on completing an NVQ. For this group, NVQs have a wider significance in challenging the exclusions of the new economic order.

NVQs also throw up in a stark way the general educational requirements of learning individuals, organisations and societies. Many adults in all age groups lack essential skills in manipulating both language and number. At the same time, the world of globalisation and information technology throws up new core skills such as modern foreign languages and computer literacy which many adults with otherwise good educational qualifications lack. Information technology has been central to many of the Employee Development schemes established in the SOLOTEC area, and the response of employees is most positive when such courses emphasise the variety of skills and applications available, rather than limited 'training courses' on the machines and systems at present in place in a particular workplace.

At one level, the new disorganised capitalism can operate within the 'two-thirds: one third' society. At another level, social exclusion threatens the very conditions of capital accumulation (social cohesion, respect for property, and so on). The recognition of this fact is partial and incomplete, even in those European countries which have signed the Social Chapter. Lash uses a comparable analysis in considering current arrangements for vocational training in enterprises. He quotes Streeck to the effect that 'it is irrational for any one capitalist to invest heavily in training workers, though it is eminently rational for capitalists as a class to invest in such training' (Lash, 194, 125). Yet beyond its investment in initial education and training, the United Kingdom depends to a large extent on the principle of voluntarism to ensure a supply of trained, skilled workers. At the same time this must be set against changing views by employers themselves of their responsibilities. In particular, as Employee Development schemes reveal, there is a growing recognition that job-specific training is an insufficient response. Employers in the SOLOTEC cohort also emphasise:

- that the pursuit of learning projects which reflect employees' own interests generate a 'culture of lifelong learning' in the workplace which facilitates ongoing training
- that initial education (however good or bad) no longer equips employees with the key skills (English, Maths, IT, languages) to deal with the changing demands for information and communication in the workplace
- that an acknowledgement of the importance of personal development in the workplace improves motivation and commitment. It may be seen as part of a new 'avowal of responsibility' (Lash 1994, 201) by firms towards their employees.

Now, if such insights are coming to inform the behaviour of a minority of employers who invest in Employee Development schemes, it must also be stated that they have only marginally influenced public policy to date, despite some positive comments on Employee Development schemes in the former government's *Lifetime Learning* paper (DfEE 1995). Important institutional actors such as the Confederation of British Industry (employers) and Trades Union Congress use the language of lifelong learning but without taking on the broader implications outlined in this paper. They remain trapped within existing borders in which 'education' and 'training' are distinct categories, as are 'employees' and 'firms', the 'personal', 'corporate' and 'public'. There is scope for border-crossing in the way public policy is formulated, and also in the way individual employers manage lifelong learning.

If perceptions of the learning implications of disorganised capitalism remains low among institutions and employers, the same can be said of individual social actors. Participation studies continue to conclude that lifelong learning is a minority activity mostly likely to be indulged in by those who already have 'good' previous educational experience (Tuckett and Sargant 1996). Thus adult learning as at present organised can be seen to reinforce the division between reflexive winners and losers, and in Beck's (1986) terms to maximise the risk of becoming the victims of social and economic change. To repeat Lash's point:

> Access to such information and communication structures — which are unequally distributed both spatially and socially — is an increasingly central factor in social inequality of class, race and gender in today's world. (Lash 1994, 213)

It is part of the argument of this paper that 'access to such information and communication structures' is at least in part determined by participation in lifetime learning. My own fieldwork in South London demonstrates very vividly how less qualified employees can use learning to minimise risk and enable individuals to engage reflexively with their own life histories (Payne 1997). Of the first 402 employees signed up for the Individual Commitment to Learning scheme, a quarter had no previous qualification and nearly two thirds had qualifications lower than NVQ level 3 (approximately equivalent to the Higher Education access level in the United Kingdom). Of those interviewed in person, 77% felt the skills they were learning were useful at work. However, just as I suggested above that enlightened employers do not draw arbitrary distinctions about which types of learning were directly relevant to the business, so employees did not draw arbitrary divisions as to how their new skills might be applied. Thus 64% thought their new skills would be useful at home, while a further 45% thought they would be useful in the local community.

Case studies of individual employees revealed how employees were using learning to improve their skills within existing jobs but also to better situate themselves in the labour market, while at the same time achieving individual satisfaction. While I am not suggesting a simple link between reflexive modernity and lifelong learning, there is evidence here that lifelong learning is one way of 'going on' in the world of late modernity and having some sense of a personal space which is expanding rather than contracting in a rapidly changing social and economic milieu. Social actors operate, almost by definition, at the interface of agency and structure, of the lifeworld and the systems world (Collins 1995). As two women of 45+ expressed it:

> I felt I had to be there (i.e. at home) for (my daughters). I don't feel the opportunities were there for me.
>
> I want to learn ... Years ago, you didn't have much choice to go to college, it wasn't really heard of ... I think it's a good idea — it came along at the right time.

Endnote and acknowledgement

Fieldwork data was collected as part of an external evaluation of two Employee Development projects run by the South London Training and Enterprise Council (SOLOTEC). The first pilot project (Passport to Learning) involved 12 firms and the second development project (Individual Commitment to Learning, see Payne 1997) over one hundred. I am grateful to SOLOTEC for permission to use this material.

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On formal, non-formal and informal lifelong learning: reconceptualising the boundaries for research, theory and practice.

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This paper seeks to argue that the nomenclature of lifelong learning offers a positive and timely reminder of the limited conceptual horizons of much theorising about the education and training of adults. In effect adult educators need to re-think the categories through which they define the proper limits of their activity.

I
as become relatively conventional in Europe and North America since the early 1970s to categorise adult learning activity into three types. They are normally conceptualised thus (after Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed, 1973):

- Formal education through systems of organised learning which are 'hierarchically structured' and 'chronologically graded' (from first school to higher education). Through these systems a society's formal education and socialisation requirements are provided and academic education and vocational, technical and professional training delivered.
- Non-formal education which is 'any organised educational activity outside the established formal system' and has identifiable learners and evident learning objectives. Voluntary organisations and community groups are frequently the vehicles for non-formal education (see Gunn 1987, 4; and Percy, Barnes, Machell and Graddon 1988).
- Informal education which, according to Coombs and colleagues, is 'the truly lifelong process that allows individuals to acquire knowledge, skills and values from daily experience'. Clearly 'informal education' is of a different order from 'formal' and 'non-formal' education and signals a very broad arena in which principal sources of learning would include home, work, friends and media. Indeed, activities in these arenas are so amorphous that the usage of the term 'education' to refer to them and their relevance to the concerns of adult educators can be judged to be problematic (see for example, Rogers 1986, 8-11).

Although this tripartite categorisation of education has lasted robustly for at least twenty-five years, critics have, of course, criticised it on the basis, for example, that the categories are not pure and/or that the dimensions that define them are not the most significant. Gunn (1987) argues theoretically that educational activity in the non-formal arena can be hierarchically structured and Percy has shown empirically that this is the case in British voluntary organisations (Percy and colleagues 1988) and in informal learning through the special interests and hobbies which British adults undertake for themselves (Percy, Burton and Withnall 1995b). Further and more significantly Peterson (1979), among others, has drawn attention to the issue of whether adult learning and activity is deliberate and intentional or not. If not, he and others term it 'incidental' learning. Peterson appears to argue that all learning in the formal and non-formal arenas should be termed deliberate but such a conclusion appears, even on first examination, to be unlikely. Indeed Percy and colleagues (1988) show this not to be the case in voluntary organisations. However, the real thrust of Peterson's distinction relates to the informal arena. A recognition that informal learning can be either intentional or incidental does challenge adult educators to consider whether 'incidental' adult learning can be judged to be 'really' learning and what connection it has (if any) with their own professional activity. Peterson writes of incidental learning taking place in the home and work and through friends, acquaintances and the mass media but he calls this list 'suggestive' and observes that there is neither empirical justification for it nor a 'basis even in the theoretical literature'. (Peterson 1979, 14)

Among the most lucid of the theoretical reformulations since 1979 of the relationship between informal and incidental adult learning is the work of Watkins and Marsick (1992) who typify incidental learning as a key sub-set of informal learning. They characterise the relationship as follows:

> Informal and incidental learning is learning from experience that takes place outside formally structured, institutionally sponsored, classroom-based activities. Informal learning is a broad term that includes any such learning; incidental learning is a subset that is defined as a by-product of some other activity. Informal learning can be planned or unplanned, but it usually involves some degree of conscious awareness that learning is taking place. Incidental learning, on the other hand, is largely unintentional, unexamined and embedded in people's closely held belief systems (Watkins and Marsick 1992, 288)

Watkins and Marsick's observations that incidental learning is a 'by-product' and its range determined by adults' belief systems are worthy of note. So, too, are their attempts to incorporate into their definitions the element of planning and, hence, by implication, introduce the much discussed (in the North American adult education) phenomenon of self-directed adult learning.

The North American literature on self-directed learning since the 1960s is voluminous partly because of the conceptual ambiguity of the term itself. Oddi (1986, 1987) identifies ten different uses of the term and distinguishes generically between self-directed learning as a process and as a personality characteristic. But the literature is also extensive because of the enormous influence of Allen Tough's empirical and theoretical work and the succeeding generations, literally, of researchers who have sought to replicate and to extend his work. Tough's basic tenet has been that adults in general can be observed to be self-teachers and that, although there are empirical differences between the varying types and conditions of adults, generally they can be shown to engage in 'learning projects' made up of identifiable and quantifiable 'learning episodes' often marked by the assistance of a guide or mentor. Tough found a wide prevalence of deliberate and intentional learning among adults normally carried out independently of professional educators.

Thus, the learning with which Tough has been concerned is rational, planned and chosen (Tough 1967, 1978). So, while Watkins and Marsick (1992) have moved beyond Tough in their acceptance that informal, non-incidental learning can be unplanned or planned, the link to Tough remains unbroken when they cautiously and carefully feel their way to the conclusion that such learning 'usually involves some degree of conscious awareness that learning is taking place'. This important point is returned to later in the paper. In sections II and III of this paper empirical work by the author is reviewed briefly in order to deepen the perspectives through which non-formal and informal education involving adults can be viewed.

II

Work by Percy, Barnes, Machell and Graddon (1988) contains relevant contextual material. A qualitative and quantitative investigation of 800 voluntary organisations, societies and clubs, in three contrasting geographical areas of the north of England, demonstrated the prevalence of a large amount of 'learning activity' (not necessarily the same as learning) among adults attending these organisations. This 'learning activity' was characterised in the study as being of a variety of kinds, some evidently formal such as teaching, organised discussion, training and assessment, others highly informal such as 'apprenticeship learning', 'practice learning', 'learning from experience' and 'learning through social interaction'. Informants in these organisations often did not recognise a distinction between 'learning' and 'doing'. Their intention was to pursue, perform, carry out or do the interest, concern or activity which brought them together with others. If this involved something which could be typified as 'learning', so be it. Whether or not there might be proved to be a learning outcome to their activity, they denied that 'learning' was a conscious intent of their behaviour and denied, sometimes vehemently, that they had been engaged in an endeavour which could be labelled as 'education'. The study therefore raised interesting theoretical and methodological issues of importance to research into informal learning. Can adults be recognised to be learning even if there is not only no prior intention to, or consciousness of, or direction to, learning but even a denial of learning and of a connection to 'education'? The study by Percy and colleagues, 1988, gave a positive answer based on an extensive study which used observation, postal questionnaires, interviews, telephone surveys and case studies. A more recent study by Elsdon, Reynolds and Stewart (1995) brings together a large quantity of case-study material on adult participation and learning in voluntary organisations which adds further supportive evidence.

III

In 1992-93 a Lancaster University research project sought to review the extant corpus of knowledge on self-directed learning and to apply some of the key concepts to a focused empirical enquiry. The project came to be influenced by concepts such as the 'organising circumstance' (Spear and Mocker 1984) and 'learning clusters' (Spear 1988) in seeking to understand self-directed learning activity as an observable phenomenon among adults which could not be properly characterised as discrete, intentional, deliberate or planned. Two groups of adults were chosen for study on the grounds that their social circumstances and physical conditions made it less likely that they would be able to participate in formally provided programmes of continuing education. The two groups were informal carers (i.e. adults who cared on a permanent basis for another adult, usually a relative, in their home because of illness or other incapacity without payment) and disabled adults. The full reports of the research are available as Percy, Burton and Withnall 1995a and 1995b. A few salient observations, only, are drawn out here.

The projects undertook a questionnaire study of 117 informal carers and an interview study of small numbers of informal carers (8) and of disabled adults (10). The enquiries were relatively open-ended and focused upon possible learning that might be associated with the social role (being a carer) or the physical condition (being disabled) and also upon learning that was connected to the respondents' 'spare-time' activities or interests. Four conclusions, relating to process, resources, circumstance and evaluation can be abstracted for the purposes of this paper.

The process of self-directed learning

Despite, or perhaps because of, their circumstances, most of these adults could be recognised as self-directing learners. However, it is difficult to decide upon which of those three words the emphasis should be put. Certainly not upon 'directing'. The process of learning was not so much directed as evolutionary or emergent; it certainly could not be described as planned. Carers acknowledged that they had to learn to be carers; they had also maintained interests or activities about which it could be said that they learned, even if they had less time than formerly. Learning, such as it was, had to be fitted in with the primary tasks of caring and completing the domestic routine for the carers and, for the disabled, of dealing with the demands of the disability. In a sense learning 'happened'; it could be serendipitous; it was frequently incomplete; but on reflection the respondents could piece together often complex processes of learning activity which clustered around a particular need or interest.

Learning resources

Respondents used learning resources which were at hand. There was no doubt about it. They rarely went far from the home for these resources and, in the case of these two groups of adults, could only do so with difficulty. Learning resources were often people and the people were regularly relatives or friends. Even with areas of learning that related to technical knowledge or expertise (such as medical conditions and prognoses and welfare financial entitlements), these adults did not necessarily use professionals or para-professionals (medical, health or social service personnel) as resources. Carers often expressed doubt about the expertise of the professionals in relation to the special circumstances of the care-receiver or of the disabled adult. It was not always the case that the professional was accessible when needed.

Organising circumstance

It was helpful to conceptualise the learning activity of these adults as occasioned and circumscribed by their particular circumstances. However, we were unconvinced that the 'circumstance' always 'organised'. That is to say, we traced instances in which important, even needed, learning did not take place. The circumstance required it, the resources for learning were not available in the proximity of the adults, and they did not set out to find them. We found it more appropriate to think of circumstances as triggers, no more; and we came to lay emphasis on the notion of the 'contiguous resource' as central to the learning environment of these adults.

Evaluation of self-directed learning.

It is not clear that these adults evaluated for their own purposes the processes of self-directed learning in which they engaged. However, when asked to reflect, they had little difficulty in indicating the means through which such evaluation could take place. For example, carers compared their care and its development with that provided by professional carers: always the former was judged superior to the latter. With regard to spare-time activities it was remarkable to what extent many of these adults could nominate external indices for evaluation — awards and certificates, invitations to talk or exhibit, requests for advice, offers of payment.

Nevertheless, such evaluation remained largely subjective. We think that our enquiries showed that this sort of learning could be incomplete, inadequate, frustrating or misdirected. In those respects, of course, it was not necessarily different from formal provision of continuing education.

IV

In a thought-provoking empirical study of family care-giving for the elderly people in Wisconsin (which in many ways parallels the above Lancaster study), Hasselkus and Ray report that analysis of their ethnographic data caused the writers to change their definition of informal learning from that of 'the lifelong process by which every person acquires and accumulates knowledge, skills, attitudes, and insights from daily experience and exposure to the environment' to that of 'the lifelong process of reflection-in-action .... by which every person makes meaning out of their experiences and life situations' (Hasselkus and Ray 1988, 32).

Both of the Lancaster studies outlined here emphasise the significance of reflection-in-action. That is to say the adults in the study were doers not learners. The 'doing' was its own justification; its content either fitted the situation or the self-definition of the adult or both. There was an extent to which 'learning' was an essential element of the 'doing'; 'learning' was another way of describing that an adult's behaviour changed and/or that reflection upon action took place. It was irrelevant that 'learning' as such was unintentional and certainly inappropriate to describe it as incidental.

What the studies suggested was that adult learning could be serendipitous, and dependent for its existence, and possible success, upon contiguous resource. But what is 'success'? There is an inherent difficulty here in importing the not wholly relevant vocabulary of professional adult educators. From this perspective the language of 'formal', 'non-formal' and 'informal' adult education is artificial, a social construct, a defining set of categories which professionals are applying to the experience of contemporaries for whom they may be alien. One can jump away from this vocabulary and attempt to chart the territory of lifelong learning not from the perspective of institutions or even from that of the adult learner but from the perspective of the individual adult as social actor seeking to function in society.

From this perspective adults may be moving between the so-called 'non-formal' and 'informal' (and even the 'formal') sectors of education and engaging in what can be perceived to be learning activity in order to either (i) survive and adapt in ways appropriate to their own sub-culture or (ii) fulfil social and vocational roles or (iii) self-actualise or (iv) some or all of these. How they do this is governed by, for example, convenience, circumstance, knowledge of the options and personal abilities as well as by economic position, belief systems, cultural capital and relationship to technological change.

Such learning activity may be characterised, to a greater or lesser extent, by incomplete information, inaccurate knowledge and mistaken understandings. It is a moot, but probably researchable, point that such characteristics may occur in 'formal' continuing education and 'incidental' learning in similar configurations. Nevertheless, here, as one surveys an unfamiliar vista of adult learning in which the conceptual hedges and walls have been laid low and re-erected in new positions, it becomes pertinent to consider the roles of the professional continuing educator.

Percy, Burton and Withnall (1995a) conclude, somewhat rhetorically, with the statement:

> the more likely prospect would be that better knowledge would allow the twin phenomena of formal and informal adult learning to complement each other as part of the whole apparatus known as lifelong learning. We would expect perspectives from the self-directed learning phenomena — those, for example, of immediacy and the organising circumstance — to reinforce current tendencies in the formal system such as the development of flexible, open and distance learning. We would expect perspectives of evaluation, of new technology, and of flexible learning materials, imported from the formal system, to influence the prevalence, nature and effectiveness, of self-directed learning among adults. It would be the professional continuing educator ... who would be charged with identifying, harmonising and revising these perspectives and with translating them into an effective future. (Percy, Burton and Withnall 1995a, 38-39)

It is not self-evident how such broad conclusions can be translated into the new learning society as the next millennium dawns. It does seem obvious, however, that professional continuing educators have to raise their eyes above and beyond the rather low horizon of providing programmes of formal provision constrained by parameters of location, time duration and format. Developments of open and distance learning over the past twenty years are only a beginning and continue to be based upon models of adults as learners as continuing educators would have them be. Developments in multi-media computer-based technology which will be accessible — potentially, and within financial constraints — to all learners in their homes, workplaces, places of entertainment etc., will increase the possibilities which both learners and educators have at their fingertips. However, there are many missing links in our current thinking about these possibilities. Complex technology can be available in the home but it can remain misunderstood, under-utilised, feared, misused or used trivially.

We think now that the notion of the 'contiguous resource' merits close examination, and extrapolation into the home-based technology environment which will be available to adult learners of the next decade. These learning resources need both to be organically connected to the institutions of society which the individual needs, or has contact with, during a lifetime and also immediately available to adult learners in the life spaces and environments which they inhabit.

This is the concept of the organic learning society. The formal sector of continuing education, as we presently know it, will have a place in it. But it will probably be a secondary place. However, the formal sector of continuing education as it could be, should have a primary place. The provision of contiguous learning resources of quality, relevance and appropriateness, can be seen to be a highly complex task requiring disinterested professionalism, and a close association between research, theory and practice.

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A non-English speaking background in adult education: breaking through the boundaries

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In predominantly English speaking countries such as North America, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, a non-English speaking background (NESB) may mean some hindrances and barriers to learning. These hindrances can act to set boundaries that can affect access, participation and completion of adult vocational education courses and a role in the local job market (Lynch 1986). A person from a non-English speaking background is usually defined as someone born in a non-English speaking country who migrates to an English speaking country or someone born in such a place with one or both parents born in a non-English speaking country. An English speaking background person (ESB) is defined as a person born in an English speaking country, whose parents were also born in an English speaking country.

In the major cities of the world's English speaking countries are regions in which many NESB people live, learn and work. For instance, in Sydney, Australia in one local government area in the South West, the Australian Bureau of Statistics 1991 Census showed that 31% of the total population were overseas born. By 1997, it is estimated that, through migration, this percentage will have risen to 34%. In this particular area the largest proportion by far of this group come from a NES background, predominantly from Asia and the Middle East.

In the past few years many more adult NESB students have enrolled in vocational education courses and, though they are usually keen to learn, have experienced difficulties in comprehending and understanding course materials and training. This can lead to adult vocational students who experience feelings of desperation, frustration, helplessness and inadequacy. The outcome of these behaviours are course withdrawal, lowered self-esteem, a waste of short public resources, as well as lack of job attainment and vocational satisfaction.

NSW TAFE statistics show that in 1995 of a total of 11,198 students who enrolled in courses at one major training college in the local government area described earlier 6,513 students were from non-English speaking backgrounds. This represents 58.2% of the student population. TAFE statistics identified 6,410 students as speaking 63 different languages at home.

Relevant literature has indicated some major barriers and hindrances for NESB students in adult vocational education. These hindrances can provide boundaries to learning and achievement which need to be broken through before progress can be achieved. How these boundaries might be best broken through is an important issue for any multicultural society in which educational equity and achievement of full potential, both social and educational/occupational, for all its citizens is valued. There are barriers in the areas of language, participation in vocational courses, learning difficulties and recognition of prior learning, access and equity as well as education and training issues.

Language barriers

Language barriers can add to the cultural shock for new NESB migrants, most people assuming a complicated language like English can be learned quickly and easily. The problem is confounded if the background language is very dissimilar to English and the migrants themselves lack literacy and fluency in their first language.

Wagner (1985) has pointed out the importance of learning English, mainly because proficiency in English language is regarded as an acceptable criterion for determining access to educational and employment opportunities for adults. Singh (1992) and Gough-Watson and Hilton (1986) report the important role that language plays as the key element to learning and the need for a better understanding by all teachers of the significance of language in the education and training process.

The Australian National Training Authority (1995) also reported that a major barrier to participation in vocational education and training was a low level of language proficiency or literacy. The report found that some NESB students believed that their English language proficiency was forcing them to enrol in inferior courses whilst others indicated that language difficulties, in combination with unemployment, was a major barrier to vocational education and training.

Participation barriers

People from non-English speaking backgrounds are a very diverse group with wide differences in the labour market and in vocational education and training participation and attainment. In 1993 only 35% of people born in non-English speaking countries undertook study or training courses compared with an estimated 50% of other Australians. Within vocational education and training, people from non-English speaking backgrounds were substantially over represented in the lower skill preparatory courses and under represented in the operatives, trades and skilled levels of study (ANTA, 1996).

Learning difficulties

Navaratnam and Mountney (1992) found that 58% of NESB students (majority from Asian countries) experienced some form of learning difficulties. The major reasons given for their learning difficulties were the terminology and colloquial terms used by teachers; the limited vocabulary of students; poor English skills; lack of confidence in oral and written communication; poor classroom facilities; difficult assessment procedures; poor quality teaching and difficulties in understanding questions.

Sim and Dhungel (1993) found that NESB women were affected by three common difficulties while pursuing TAFE study. The major difficulties cited by them were lack of time to study at home, writing of assignments, reading and understanding class textbooks and the class teacher.

Cultural and other boundaries

Cultural differences can mean differences in perception and meaning that can contribute to making learning a difficult and confusing process. This is especially so if the material presented or its manner of presentation is culturally inappropriate or does not compensate for cultural differences. As well as this, the material to be learned must be seen to be meaningful, appropriate and relevant to the needs and goals of the NESB learners.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL) and access

Some researchers have identified another education and training boundary as the lack of recognition of workers' qualifications gained overseas (Hill 1990). Australian data indicates that for 1993 40% of migrants with post-school qualifications did not have their qualification recognised in Australia. Obviously, for these people, specific attention needs to be given to the processes for recognising and upgrading existing skills (ANTA 1996).

Access to entry level training is restricted by the general difficulties experienced by the NESB community in obtaining employment which may be a pre-requisite for getting a training place in structured vocational education. The strong nexus between the ability of this group to secure employment and their ability to access vocational education and training is often still a point of major concern.

The present study

This research examines the perceived learning needs of a group of adult NESB students studying at a large vocational training college in the largest city in Australia, Sydney (the demographics of which was outlined earlier). It aimed to determine whether their needs are being met by the education and training they received and whether their difficulties and major boundaries were primarily institutionally (related to the training process) or non-institutionally grounded.

Whether NESB or not, many people have come to realise that, for employment, they need to have computing skills. With the rapid advancement in modern technology it has become imperative that people have some knowledge of computing. Other subject areas could have been studied but this area of study has, in the past, proved to be very popular with NESB (and ESB) students. It was reasoned that many of the barriers and hindrances that NESB students potentially face upon entry to adult vocational education would emerge in research in this popular area.

The ultimate aim of this study is to develop an awareness of the learning needs of NESB students by approaching the variety of experiences of these students; by identifying the problems encountered while studying computing and to identify strategies that could be used to meet these needs. These strategies could be used as a basis to establish any future planning, changes and provision of services.

Method

Sample

The NESB student sample was identified on the basis of the results of a questionnaire given to all students studying computing at a large vocational and education college in the South West of Sydney. The sample size was 175 students of which 86% were female. Of the total sample there were discovered to be 133 people of NESB (76% of the total sample) of which 83% were women.

The questionnaire

Both quantitative and qualitative information was collected from the sample via a survey questionnaire. NESB students were identified and demographic information obtained. Most questions could be answered with only a tick. They were worded as simply as possible to facilitate comprehension and understanding.

More weighting was assigned to students' attitudes, self-perceptions and suggestions towards improving learning. Questions elicited students' personal particulars to provide some background information about the respondents for data analysis and identifying the target group (NESB). Other questions elicited relevant information about the learner's needs, goals, identifying difficulties experienced and determining strategies to meet their needs. Thus their perceived learning hindrances, barriers and boundaries were canvassed.

Procedure

The questionnaire was trialled and some slight changes made before administration. Generally the questionnaire was able to be completed in class time, which ensured a very good response rate. A covering letter was included giving reasons for the survey and assuring confidentiality.

Results

Of the 133 NESB students who responded 64% were in full-time attendance with the rest part-time, whilst 87% indicated that the course was a preferred choice for vocational experience or was a requirement for a job. As expected, most NESB students (64%) chose the course to obtain a qualification and get a job. Sixty-nine percent of these students were currently unemployed, 77% requiring new job relevant skills (13% of these as a prerequisite for further study) whilst only 13% attended for interest reasons alone. The responses showed that the majority of NESB students (95%) perceived that the course in which they had enrolled was expected to be beneficial to them in fulfilling their vocational needs.

The collection of information from both NESB and ESB students allowed student differences to be compared. Table 1 outlines the percentage of NESB and ESB students reporting problems or barriers to learning in various areas.

Table 1. Perceived problems: comparative data

(NESB vs ESB)	NESB n = 133 %	ESB n = 42 %
Not enough time available on computer	22.6	14.3
Content covered too fast	21.8	42.8
Understanding content of the lessons	20.3	4.8
Finding time to work and study at home or Library	17.3	19.0
Instructions not clear to me	16.5	11.9
Understanding what teachers say	15.0	0
Comprehending and understanding the course materials	14.3	2.4
Not enough practical exercises	14.3	4.8
Communicating with teachers and other students	12.0	4.8
Little or no feedback provided	10.5	4.8
Content covered too slowly	8.3	4.8
No one to see about my computing problems	5.3	2.4
Resources not adequate, for example, computers, printers	4.5	4.8

The results show that, separate to the major problems for both groups of delivery speed and of needing more computer practice time, other differences emerged between the NESB and ESB group. The NESB group indicated more problems with:

- understanding lesson content (20% vs 5%);
- unclear instructions (17% vs 12%);
- understanding teachers (15% vs 0%);
- comprehending and understanding course materials (14% vs 2%);
- too few practical exercises (14% vs 5%);
- communication problems (12% vs 5%);
- lack of perceived feedback (11% vs 5%).

Qualitative comment indicated other areas of difficulties experienced by NESB students, such as:

- all instructions should be written rather then spoken;
- teachers need more understanding;
- teachers did not have empathy towards their learning ability, that is, used stereotypes;
- no access to computer outside of TAFE hours;
- long hours;
- not learning enough, that is, more advanced tasks should be given;
- need to learn about other computer systems; and
- should cover latest computer packages.

Other results indicated that the NESB students were motivated and that the majority found the course challenging, interesting and enjoyable (between 51% and 64% of respondents). Eighty percent of NESB respondents did not find the course difficult, rather they made suggestions about how it could be improved for them. Table 2 shows the factors perceived to improve learning.

It is clear from the results represented in Table 2 that the highest frequency responses supported improvements in the clarity of verbal instructions given. Qualitative comments in support suggested instructions be written on the board or on paper, rather than be given orally. Next came the suggestion that more practical exercises be provided, which links with the suggested extra time requirements for work. Eight percent of students suggest a 'buddy' system would be a useful aid to learning; that is where two students work together to improve understanding. Other suggestions which received some support were for language tutorial

Table 2. Perceived importance of factors to improve learning

Factors	Percentage
Clearer instructions	17%
Increase practical exercises	14%
Buddy system	8%
Language tutorial support	5%
Two teachers in room	5%
More time	5%
Others (for example, more understanding teachers)	1%

support and the provision of an extra teacher for help when required.

Ninety-seven percent of students indicated that a good knowledge of English was important. Of those students who made qualitative comments, the majority used the word 'understanding' as a key word or the word 'instructions' (23%). They clearly perceived the importance of good English skills as a basis for learning with understanding and being better able to follow instructions. Twenty-five percent of NESB students indicated that they would prefer a course designed for people with different fluency levels of English.

As for the assessment component of the course, 43% of NESB students requested that simpler language be used whilst others opted for clearer written instructions and formatting; the test requirement to be verbally explained with more pre-exam practice given (33%, 20%, 37% and 27%, respectively). Anecdotal evidence from the students indicated that lack of English language skills is the main factor for the inability to comprehend and understand subject assessment requirements.

Demographic information provided by the 133 NESB students indicated that they were most frequently from Lebanon, China, Vietnam and Hong Kong (23%, 17% and 16%, respectively). There were 21 other nationalities represented in the sample.

Qualitative comments indicated that some of the NESB students were retraining because their overseas qualifications were not accepted and so they were required to participate in a further year or two of study to obtain the same qualification obtained overseas. They indicated that they had to enrol in training courses and gain the qualification to make them employable because of family and financial commitments and there was just no other alternative.

Conclusion and discussion

The results indicated that the greatest hindrance to full NESB student participation and learning was substandard English language skill. This was in spite of the finding that a large proportion of NESB students, as compared with the ESB students (25% vs 2%, respectively), had obtained a prior degree or diploma. Many others had obtained a post-high school certificate or had graduated from high school. In relative terms, they appear to be quite well qualified but either had not been granted RPL or exemptions or had not applied for them. The difficulties experienced by some NESB students because of the English language hindrance have been reported regularly in the literature. English language and literacy skills are seen as setting critical boundaries for effective education and training for some students (AECR, 1991).

Other results indicated that they had difficulties with a range of issues. These issues included factors such as: not enough time available for practice on the computer, content covered too fast, misunderstanding contents of lessons and difficulty in finding time to work and study at home or library. These findings agree with Sim and Dhungel's (1993) outcome that NESB women cited 'lack of time to study at home' as one of their major difficulties experienced.

A substantial proportion of the difficulties experienced by the NESB students were related to the students themselves, such as not understanding content of lessons or not understanding what teachers say. NESB students reported having difficulty understanding teachers, communicating with teachers and reading and understanding the course materials. These findings agreed with Singh (1992) and Sim and Dhungel's (1993) findings. It is interesting to note that ESB students indicated experiencing difficulties to a greater extent than NESB students in the areas of 'content covered too fast' and 'finding time to study at home or library'. For both NESB and ESB students, the first difficulty could possibly relate to teachers not catering effectively for the learning capacity of the students. The second difficulty is non-course related and therefore, difficult to assess, perhaps, family responsibilities is a contributing factor.

Twenty-three percent of NESB students indicated that the course was difficult and they suggested that 'clearer instructions be written'; 'more practical exercises given' and the use of a 'buddy system' to improve their understanding. The majority of NESB students (97%) indicated that English is important when studying computing and commented it helps with understanding and following of instructions. Twenty-five percent of students indicated computing courses should be available at different English fluency levels; 15% suggested the course to be designed specially for people from non-English speaking backgrounds and 8% indicated English to be incorporated in computing subjects.

Suggestions for improving assessment tasks (in rank order) are as follows: assessment task be written in simpler language; assessor to explain purposes; provide clearer written instructions; more pre-exam practice; clear setting out. These findings support Navaratnam and Mountney's (1992) results, indicating that one of the learning difficulties indicated by overseas students was difficult assessment procedures.

- Both institutional and non-institutional factors were thus implicated as hindrances to learning. Nevertheless, institutions and staff at the local level, need to continue to address the concerns identified by NESB students so that these concerns do not create boundaries between dissatisfaction or withdrawal and course success and job attainment. Some suggested ways, within the educational institution, of breaking through the barriers or hindrances to learning are:
- educate teaching staff in strategies, including counselling strategies and a variety of teaching strategies, for teaching NESB students;
- rewrite course and subject material to facilitate ease of reading and comprehension;
- provide course and subject information brochures printed in the most common languages used by local students;
- survey withdrawn students to identify problems and any institutional reasons for withdrawal;
- ensure teachers are aware of those services provided by learning assistance centres (if available) and how they can have students gain assistance;
- provide information sessions so that NESB students are made fully aware of course and subject requirements;
- employ bilingual course information officers;
- experiment with the 'buddy system' of learning;
- acknowledge, if possible, the previous experience of the students; including recognition of prior learning;
- provide ongoing English language assistance;
- assessment of NESB students' level of English proficiency prior to enrolment. This can provide awareness to both students and teachers of possible later hindrances they may encounter if proficiency is low;
- change some teaching and assessment practices e.g. the provision of clear written or additional instructions; time available for questions or follow up by the students;
- provide explanations via touch screen elements;
- consider NESB students' needs and gaols and devise strategies which aim at reducing the effects of potential barriers to their present and continuing education and training.

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Academic practice for disaffected youth? Re-interpreting university and community boundaries

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Participation in UK higher education is increasing and slowly changing in profile. Until recently higher education was primarily full-time and concerned with degrees for 18 year old school leavers. Nowadays the majority of students are adults, part time and not necessarily studying for degrees. Some do not even study in universities at all. Nevertheless the UK higher education system retains a public image which is elitist and bears little relevance to ordinary lives (Preece, Woodrow and Weatherald 1997, forthcoming).

University continuing education courses consist primarily of non-degree study, defined by Slowey (1997, 196) as: 'for learners other than those progressing directly to higher education from full time initial studies'. Continuing education has included, for many institutions, a historical commitment to 'countering educational disadvantage' (UCACE 1992). This work has traditionally been seen as: 'outside the boundaries' of university learning (Parry 1989, 18), and entailed working with marginalised social groups. Recent funding regulations have attempted to move the continuing education discourse closer to the mainstream by accrediting previously non award bearing activity, thus ensuring it is of university level and assessed as such.

Alongside these changes a new discourse is growing — one which explores how higher education can make itself more relevant to wider society in a climate of increasing participation from different social sectors. A preoccupation in this debate is the struggle to identify the quintessential nature of higher education (Barnett 1988) and how higher education contributes to lifelong learning (Duke 1992; NIACE 1993; Tuckett 1996; Coffield and Williamson 1997). The emerging discourse for higher education in a lifelong learning context is pushing out the boundaries for university activity and making way for some border re-definitions, particularly in a continuing education context.

This paper describes how one continuing education project interprets the boundaries of those discourses. It is based on a research study of a cohort of ten young adults who attend courses, which are funded by Lancaster University, in their local youth centre. The first section of the paper challenges normative concepts of adulthood by identifying the development needs of disaffected young adults. It explores the role of youth work in bridging the learning gap between the stages of school and non compulsory education and compares them with the professed teaching goals of continuing education. The second section explores empirically how far a higher education learning ethos can be maintained for participants who have few or no formal qualifications and whose transition to adulthood is fragmented and disaffected. Although the research is still in its early stages interview data will be used from three youth leaders and some participants.

Transition to adulthood

Coles identifies the transition from youth to adulthood as:

> A state of relative semi-independency and autonomy, during which people go through a series of staged progressions to the independency of the adult (Coles 1995, 89).

Adulthood, in the male, white Western world, is seen as a social process where the adult has typically moved from full time education to a full time job, lives independently from the family of origin and participates in the wider community. The discourse of adult education is predicated on this model of adulthood. The nature of earlier experiences, however, can affect these moves, often resulting in 'fractured transitions' where only partial status change takes place. Sometimes the partial status change is due to the cultural or social inappropriateness of the model. At other times it is due to negative experiences — unemployment, for example. For people who have received special school education or other institutional intervention (for instance, crime, health or care related), the prospect of fractured transitions increases. The result can be disaffection from normative boundaries for social integration into adult life (Coles 1995).

The continuing education needs of disaffected young people, therefore, are often in a 'no-man's land' between institutionally defined goals and their own definitions of learning need. So, for instance, people's literacy skills, qualifications and social skills may not match the discourse expectations for adult learners; traditional access routes into further or higher education may not be appropriate. The role of youth work is often one of social intervention to alleviate this process; it entails working outside normative education boundaries and directly with the experience of disaffection (Smith 1988). Youth work encourages an informal, dialogic relationship between learner and leader, addressing issues of immediate relevance through an experiential teaching style and with a critical questioning approach: 'Problem posing and theory making which connects with the situations they find themselves in' (Smith

1988, 114). This description bears close resemblance to the educational style of university continuing education, which Slowey (1997) sees as a bridge between wider societal interests and the academic world.

Higher education and continuing education

Continuing education in an HE context, implicitly at least, assumes a particular kind of adulthood. It is, for instance, based on: 'the intrinsic motivation of the individual to learn' (McNair 1997, 108) and a learning environment: 'into which people drop in and out' (Robertson 1997, 79). The notion of an HE experience assumes the continued development, rather than initial pursuit, of critical thinking skills. Barnett, for instance, describes some 'essential conditions' of HE:

> The development of the students' intellectual skills or academic competencies ... critical abilities, especially the propensity to relate what is learnt to a broad context and to make relevant connections, the willingness to accept the rules of rational inquiry and the self motivation of the student, such as to go on learning and being self critical independently of any intrinsic influence. (Barnett 1988, 245)

On the one hand these criteria enable us to exclude certain people from higher education. On the other hand it may be that these essential conditions of higher education might be appropriate for a wider range of people if their access routes are mediated differently. Merton, for instance, points out that some young people require a more strategic introduction to these concepts. He advocates: 'softer outcomes (intermediate qualifications) and measures of achievement (distance travelled)'; with 'flexible' but 'rigorous' accreditation and assessment procedures (Merton 1997, 153). In other words, it cannot be assumed that the state of adulthood is coterminous with a state of readiness for the adult learning environment. It also cannot be assumed that people who have not reached this state of readiness are either unable or that they will achieve the required maturity unaided. The following empirical research begins to explore whether universities should be involved in the 'softer' outcomes and measures of achievement recommended by Merton. A brief description of the programme and the course in question is followed by interview responses from youth leaders and some participants. The findings will be limited, for space reasons, to concerns around teaching styles, educational goals and perceived value of university involvement in courses for disaffected young adults.

Lancaster University's community access programme

The community access programme (CAP) works between the boundaries of further and higher education. It provides short, flexibly accredited courses (Foundation Credits) in partnership with community organisations. The qualification levels stretch across GCSE and A level standards. Learning outcomes are measured in terms of the learner's ability to analyse developments appropriate to the course undertaken and not necessarily through text-based knowledge. The courses focus on developing a range of skills which would be applicable to a higher education context. The most common skills courses are: Personal Awareness; Study; Enterprise; Investigation and IT. In January this year a local authority youth service in the North of England approached the CAP with a view to incorporating the Enterprise Skills course into their development goals for a group of young, disaffected adults aged 16 to 24. The project is called Workshop 97.

Workshop 97

Participants were already known to the youth service. Most had attended a preparatory course 'Workshop 96' the previous term. They were invited by the youth leaders to take part in the workshops because they experience a range of difficulties integrating into the local employment market or other, more formal, education and training programmes. The enterprise course was selected in order to encourage problem solving, teamwork and interpersonal skills in the achievement of a tangible project outcome — in their case the organisation of a trip to Scotland. Of the twelve participants most are age 20 or under. Six attended special school and only three have any GCSE qualifications. Three were excluded from school for behavioural difficulties. None have ever been in paid employment; all live at home and have difficulties in social settings. Their adult status therefore meets none of the criteria defined by Coles. Indeed, their schooling placed them in a particularly vulnerable category of fractured transition to adulthood. The participants attended the course voluntarily. They were defined by Barbara as:

> Youngsters who think they will never get work ... who have got very poor interpersonal skills and ... don't think of themselves as very important.

For Marian, the organisation's learning goals for the participants included: 'to develop a learning culture within themselves ... to tackle some of their anti-social behaviour'. In Barnett's terms this would mean becoming 'self critical' and stimulate some motivation to 'go on learning' beyond the protected environment of this course. Critically for the CAP were the youth leaders' own discourses for involving a university in the centre's activities. They identified both strategic and philosophical values. On the one hand the university's involvement affected some participants' commitment:

> We re-iterate the fact that it is a university course and it's accredited and I think for some of them it

> improves their attendance .. it makes them more committed to the course (Barbara).

Although not all the participants shared this vision, Alison, aged 23, with unhappy memories of special school and three siblings at university, was highly motivated by the university image: 'I felt older, older than I am and really proud of meself'. Following on from this Barbara also felt the course broadened horizons: 'It's keeping their minds open to the possibility of continuing learning'. Marian developed this last point by comparing the course with those offered in the college:

> We are working in a town where the college would be very traditionally very vocationally biased. Things are changing slowly but culturally sixth form is for doing A levels where you go onto university and F College is for doing vocational courses.

In one sense, then, the option of university involvement raised the possibility of a learning ethos which was not just linked to employment — a route which already had negative equity for these participants. On the other hand the university involvement seemed to influence standards, both for the leaders:

> The link with the university has given this project some rigour which might not otherwise have been there. It is an externally applied rigour ... and people are a lot more serious and what they are tending to do within this is spend the first session in looking at theory and the second session in the application of the theory into the project (Marian)

and for the participants:

> They know they have got to produce a file at the end with all their bits and pieces in and they know that it is important and they are not just in for a good time. (Barbara)

It might be argued that this latter element of quality assurance would be equally applicable to any assessed course from a college or elsewhere. But the significant link here was the university's academic association with theory. The notion of theory was a concept which all the youth leaders elaborated. Marian explained its applicability as a learning tool:

> It's about transferring knowledge, about knowledge that they can use in different situations ... so they can understand why situations occur or why people react ... it's probably equipping them for many aspects of life and actually preparing them for other training programmes.

Another of Barnett's intrinsic HE goals to 'relate what is learnt to a broad context', then, was being applied in this course. The concept of knowledge in this case, however, had been interpreted as a skill development process rather than point of information. Barbara and Margaret explained their development of students' critical abilities to understand and make 'relevant connections' from theory:

> The theory for this week is interpersonal skills and we are going to hopefully demonstrate that in order to achieve your aim whatever it may be you've got to be able to use these same skills in working with other people and there are ways in which you approach people and depending on the way you choose you may or may not get your goals. (Barbara)

The intention of the exercise would be to introduce critical awareness which would ultimately result in an individual's ability to be self critical of their own behaviour irrespective of extrinsic prompting. These perceptions were reinforced in the same session by group discussions around specific questions:

> So it's: 1) give an example of the positive action you have given to Workshop 97; 2) what have other people given to Workshop 97; 3) how do you help other people in the group; 4) what actions by you or others have not helped the group. (Margaret)

Whilst it could be justified that the participants were developing skills of awareness which would help initiate a process of lifelong learning, an academic might be forgiven for dismissing the described activities as inappropriate for university continuing education accreditation. Indeed the youth leaders were under no illusion that their activities were at university level. Nevertheless, their rationale for breaking the boundaries for HE learning were again strategic and philosophical. On a strategic level, the local college offered practical, rather than process oriented courses. This more analytical form of learning was simply not available through other local accreditation mechanisms. On a philosophical level the course was being delivered in a teaching style which Slowey (1997) claims has distinctive characteristics for continuing education. It was, for example, flexible, fostered values of 'citizenship' and recognised experience as part of the learning process. One student, Carol, for instance, made a direct link between the course's social awareness raising and her ability to take on a citizenship role in a voluntary capacity as a receptionist. This flexibility and the particular relationship the leaders had with their learning group was regarded as a crucial aspect of its success:

> Well, the benefit is the relaxed atmosphere that we work in, talking to them, not at them, sat with them, not sort of segregating ourselves so it comes like the teacher-student type of thing because we're all together like Barbara is sat at one end of the table and I'm sat at the other end (Margaret) ... We accept them as mature young people ... not looking upon them as college numbers or students, they've gone above students

> and they are young people in their own right. (Barbara)

This perception was reinforced by the participants: 'I'm treated more like an adult' (than at college) 'and I'm responsible for my own learning' (Carol). For Steve, aged 24 and unemployed since the age of 17, the course was valued for its combined social and learning resource: 'I enjoy it you know, going, because like I say you're socialising with people and you're picking up you know new skills each week as you go along'.

The leaders' behaviour as facilitators made the link between disaffection and what can be made possible. They were drawing on Smith's identification of social intervention and Merton's desire for sensitive targets but with rigorous and flexible assessment systems. The course had taken on Tuckett's (1996) notion of HE as 'a kind of learning' by stimulating critical thought at a level which nudged vulnerable and unconfident minds forward. On an experiential footing the young people were also creating their own knowledge, rather than receiving transmitted versions. This aspect of learning is identified by McNair (1997) as the essential distinction between university education and other forms of study. Whilst the participants' knowledge might not be original on a global scale, it was new to them and they were making direct contributions to its formulation. Although participant responses are sketchy at this stage, the combined interview discourses suggest the following features were creating a kind of HE learning which differed from school or college experiences. The course combined youth work and continuing education pedagogy to stimulate new, informal, but also more mature learning experiences for people who were trapped in a fractured transition phase of youth. The curriculum moved learners away from receiving information to situations where they were being asked to take responsibility for their own learning and analyse the transferability of that understanding into the wider community. The external moderation by the university, as opposed to college, steered the course towards theory building beyond practical exercises and, for some, motivated individual commitment to quality in their work.

Under these criteria, perhaps the notion of HE *level*, as opposed to learning *style*, is a boundary which deserves to be broken. As Harrison says:

> If the purposes of HE really are about the stimulus of critical thinking and analysis, .. the promotion of personal development, then there is a requirement to recognise that it is possible for this development to take place in contexts which lie outside the domain of HE institutions; (Harrison 1993, 16)

but supported, I would add, by the rigour of assessment and quality control.

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A momentary lapse of reason? Postmodernism and critical adult education research

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In recent years two perspectives upon adult education research have been widely discussed. The first of these is an approach based upon critical theory, which has to some extent grown out of radical and popular adult education endeavours. The second perspective is informed by the arguments of postmodern social theory, and in particular the notion of contingent and localised knowledges. While these perspectives have some elements in common, for example the analysis of culture as a contested domain, there are also some fundamental differences which lie too deeply to be easily disregarded.

I will set out these two perspectives, what the differences are, and the way that educational researchers have attempted to build bridges between critical theory and postmodernism. I will argue that there has been an attempt to subsume postmodern understandings within those of critical theory, and that this relationship is unsustainable. I will suggest an alternative relationship, and discuss the implications of that relationship for research in adult education.

Critical theory and the postmodern

Critical theory developed out of the work of a series of Marxist scholars. It is essential to draw a distinction between critical theory and critical thinking, as represented by the work of Brookfield (1987). While critical *thinking* does assist in the development of rational analyses of situations, critical *theory* goes beyond this to examine the relations of power which exist in everyday life. Critical theory prompts questions about the way in which popular culture serves the interests of capitalism, or the school system reproduces gender norms. Critical theory can be summarised as a critique of the oppressive nature of contemporary social forms.

Two of the most important aspects of critical theory are the privileged status of rationality and the possibility of transcendence. Rationality is seen as an essential tool for understanding the world, and there is an inherent belief that a rational world would be more just. This reflects the Enlightenment ideals of Truth, Justice and Progress, which hold that the human situation will improve over time as society evolves to be closer to the ideal form. Standing alongside rationality is the notion of transcendence, which suggests that humans can rise above the constraints of their situation and become free. Bringing together rationality and transcendence creates the argument that humans can rise above ideology and false consciousness, becoming free through understanding the ways in which they are oppressed. This possibility has been represented as the emancipatory potential of given educational settings and underpins the work of Freire (1972), among a number of other educators.

In considering contemporary critical theory, it is difficult to avoid the work of Jurgen Habermas. Over the last thirty years he has produced a series of books of remarkable depth, complexity and range. One of the central arguments of Habermas' version of critical theory (1984, 1987) is that the key to emancipation is communication. There is an ideal speech situation to which humans can aspire, and this speech situation has a number of universal norms associated with it. For Habermas, all people can theoretically work towards a clear form of communication which rises above ideology and socially formed distortions through rationality and truthfulness. However, Habermas takes some pains to point out that this ideal speech situation is not attainable, but is a guiding ideal. This concept fits well with claims that the Enlightenment project is not complete, and Habermas places himself as a late modernist. His work provides a useful means to contemplate the emancipatory potential of education.

Postmodern social theory supports different perspectives upon the structures of society. The term 'postmodern' refers to an era of thought rather than any particular brand. The types of thinking often referred to as postmodern include poststructuralism, postcolonialism, and some areas of feminist thought. The underlying premise of postmodern thought is that the Enlightenment project is finished, and that we live in new times. The meta-narratives of Truth, Justice and Progress are no longer relevant — they have been fragmented by changes in the structure of society (Lyotard 1984). The present time contains many truths, many justices, and progress may be a problem rather than a solution.

The most extreme forms of postmodern thought tend to be immobilising for the social actor. That people construct, and are constructed by, language is a modern structuralist argument. Some postmodern theories, however, emphasise the arbitrary nature of language, and the free floating potential of signs without singular meanings (Baudrillard 1994), which undermines the utility of hermeneutic thought. If language has no underlying structure, how can it be possible to truly understand one another? Many theorists have turned away from radical postmodernism as simply being unhelpful in trying to understand social situations and create a more balanced form of society.

The most influential aspects of postmodern thought tend to be diversity and contingency. The notion of many truths opens up new perspectives upon educational research, moving the emphasis away from positivistic methods of attaining the 'correct' way of understanding a situation. Each understanding reached is contingent upon a number of factors, not the least of which is the identity of the researcher. There are no universal norms, no ideal forms of action, and no guarantees of the right thing to do. The connection between means and ends becomes tenuous and circumstantial. However, each of these aspects does not necessarily require a postmodern stance, and it is helpful to consider the relationship between critical and postmodern perspectives on a deeper level.

The differences between these approaches to social theory are substantial and essential. The emancipatory potential of educational endeavours has no meaning in postmodern theories, because there is no transcendental possibility. Humans are created by local conditions, and cannot rise above them, though there is a potential for change. Rationality has no particular value in postmodern perspectives, since it privileges one view of truth and one way of understanding situations. In addition, the rational conception of planning as a purposive act does not recognise the lack of causational linkage between means and ends. The border country between postmodernism and critical theory is contested, complex and ever-shifting.

Educational research along the border

Attempts have been made to work with both critical and postmodern analyses despite the complexity of the relationship between these two theoretical approaches. This is often attempted by critical theorists who become fascinated by the implications of postmodern arguments, especially in the area of culture. The two types of thought also have some common approaches to epistemology, and share the contemporary concern with both the *research problem* and *the problem of research*. A number of writers who combine the areas are particularly interested in representation — the problem of who can speak for whom; and positionality — the implications of the relationships of power between the researcher and the researched.

While these epistemological issues are extremely significant, a common response to their complexity has been the subsumption of postmodern perspectives within critical theory. In other words, the complex subject of postmodernity has been inserted into critical perspectives as if recognition of diversity and contingency is sufficient to reconcile the two theoretical areas adequately. Habermas himself has tended towards this view in recent writing, suggesting that the manifestation of universal norms is dependent upon the situation (1993). Consideration of this approach suggests that caution is necessary if the problems highlighted by postmodern theory are not to be masked by the overarching and universalising potential of critical theory.

One means of reconciliation which has been explored is the attempt to focus research upon the local as much as possible, and to invite the participation of the researched (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, Lather 1991). It is possible to extend this approach to argue that action research is the most effective methodology for postmodern/critical research (Kincheloe 1995). Validity in research is seen as predicated upon the transformational potential of the research endeavour, and there is an underlying assumption that actors who understand a situation will inevitably act to change it. It has been suggested, for example, that researchers 'need to locate their work in a transformative praxis that leads to the alleviation of suffering and the overcoming of oppression' (Kincheloe and McLaren 1994, 154).

This notion is captured in technical terms by the idea of catalytic validity, or 'the degree to which the research process re-orients, focuses and energises participants toward knowing reality in order to transform it' (Lather 1991, 68). This form of validity sits alongside others in the assessment of critical research, but acts as the cornerstone of this particular approach to knowledge creation. The obverse of this notion is that research which is not transformational is not valid research. At a time when qualitative research is extremely significant in education, it seems to me that it is problematic to base measures of validity upon factors which are only capable of being influenced peripherally by the researcher. Nonetheless, notions such as catalytic validity do offer the means to deal with pragmatic application of critical research philosophies.

The local focus of these arguments is a necessary feature in beginning to engage with postmodern challenges to understanding, but there is also a danger of trivialising postmodernity. Some of the relativistic ideas of postmodern theories are adopted and slotted into the emancipatory imperative of critical theory without the underlying issues being addressed. Among these issues are what it actually means to be emancipated when a social perspective which does not see transcendence as possible is validated, and what the basis of judgements on concepts such as alleviating suffering should be. If it is not possible to know the positionality of another, or to represent them without problems, then how can the researcher know what energises participants towards knowing reality in order to transform it?

I believe that there is a real danger of dissimulation if research as praxis is adopted unproblematically, with the researcher taking on the responsibility for changing the life situation of the researched (Lather 1991). This assumes that it is possible to improve an individual's situation through research — an attractive idea, but one which is incompatible with postmodern understandings of values and the complexity of the subject position. The imposition of the culturally bound understandings of the researcher regarding improvement is not legitimated within postmodern or critical theory.

In this argument I am not suggesting that researchers do not have a responsibility to participants. My concern is that this responsibility is theorised with care and respect, and without the hubris which often accompanies discussions of the research function. When researchers work with people, new knowledge is created as an inevitable part of that process. It is problematic, however, to evaluate that knowledge on the basis of emancipatory action and to claim a postmodern basis for that stance. To do so is to subsume postmodern perspectives under modernist critical theory.

Reformulating the relationship — towards the post-critical

I believe that postmodern perspectives offer a great deal to critical theorists, not the least of which is the opportunity to understand social processes based on post-industrial modes of production. However, to benefit from what postmodernism offers, critical theorists must find a way to bring the two fields of thought close enough to each other that they can touch. This requires a means of overcoming issues of rationality and transcendence, and finding a common ground on positionality and representation.

In order to achieve this relationship, it is necessary to move away from the idea of the postmodern subject within critical theory based analysis. One way to do this is to reverse the relationship, and privilege the postmodern and the postrational. The larger field moves from being the analysis offered by critical theory to the set of contingent and diverse relationships which are highlighted by postmodern theory. Critical theory can then claim specific examples of those relationships as the object of analysis.

The effect of this reversal is to create areas of bounded rationality within which the claims of critical theory can be lodged. Local and contingent knowledge can be recognised within a local and contingent rationality. Validity can be ascribed within the research situation, rather on the basis of a researcher led conception of progress. This locality is reflected in the criteria identified by Lincoln (1995) as 'emerging criteria'. She suggests that validity in qualitative research should be based upon a number of relational issues — that is, issues which illuminate or emphasise the relationship between the researcher and the researched in the specific situation. The first of these is the standards adopted by the inquiry community, or the way in which the form of research undertaken is consistent with other examples. The second is the degree to which positionality is acknowledged. The third is an interesting criterion Lincoln calls 'Community', which refers to the degree to which the research is accessible to, and serves the interests of, the community of the researched. The final criteria put forward include voice, which is similar to representation; critical subjectivity, or reflexiveness; reciprocity; sacredness; and sharing the perquisites of privilege.

The epistemology these criteria express is one which recognises that the claims to knowing we can make as academic researchers are predicated on the willingness of others to share their experiences and their meanings. The understanding of researchers will always be partial, and the creation of knowledge through research is a selective and collective process. In addition, no claims to universality are made, and the researcher does not have to claim insight into what might improve the lives of others. Rationality becomes negotiable, and is seen as part of the ongoing discussion between the researcher and the researched, an orientation which is particularly well developed in action research methodology. The emphasis on reciprocity once again challenges the assumption that the researcher brings privileged knowledge into the research setting, though the researcher is seen to bring specialised knowledge.

If critical theory is localised in this way, it is necessary to consider the fate of the transcendental subject. This notion underlies the work of Marx and his followers. To discard it entirely is to fall into the bleak determinism of structuralism, but the idea is fundamentally incompatible with postmodern perspectives and cannot be transformed into a phenomenon of bounded rationality. By definition, transcendence is overarching. However, what can be substituted legitimately for transcendence is the more grounded notion of agency. The emphasis changes from rising above material conditions to acting upon them. While this substitution does not address underlying philosophical issues completely, it does provide a potential bridge between two significant and fruitful areas of thought.

In summary, I have suggested that the relationship between postmodern and critical theories should be such that the rationality of critical theory is seen to apply in bounded areas of a diverse, complex and postrational world. Reason has a place in the postmodern era, but it is not the dominant or singular place. Instead reason exists within particular localities and particular forms, as a historical manifestation of human aspiration. This reconceptualisation can be termed post-critical research, referring to a process of building critical insights within bounded areas of a postrational society.

Adult education research

The application of these ideas to adult education research is an interesting project. While education itself is a modernist endeavour, tied into ideas of Truth and Progress, it has been pointed out that adult education has often represented a postmodern moment. This argument is predicated on the view that adult educators do not strive to fix meanings, but to support an ongoing process of meaning formation (Usher and Edwards 1994). This is certainly applicable to some forms of adult education, but there are other forms, such as some English as a Second Language programmes, where it does not apply.

There is a tendency for research based on critical or postmodern theories to de-emphasise empirical work. There is little critical work in adult education which can approach the stature of *Learning to Labour* (Willis 1977), in which the pressures upon working class lads to get working class jobs are laid out clearly. Instead, the discussion is often carried out at the level of theory despite repeated calls for research to be viewed as a form of praxis. When an attempt is made to bring an explicitly emancipatory agenda into the educational setting there is often a great deal of resistance from the participants in the program (Ellsworth 1989, Lather 1991). Viewing the research situation as the potential site of an internal rationality to be created rather than discovered changes the nature of research as praxis. The emphasis moves from emancipation and constraint towards agency and potential. The validity of the research is not based on the extent to which conform to a universal norm, but on what they choose to understand based on their life situation. This is not to deny the influence of ideology, but to suggest that it is necessary to move away from universal approaches to the exploration of ideological understandings.

The creation of areas of bounded rationality for critical research requires that the issues of representation and positionality are dealt with explicitly. Statements of whom the research is speaking for are entwined in the creation of these bounded areas, as is consideration of the positionality of all the participants in the research project. To bound and critically explore the practices of a family literacy project, for example, would have to start with a definition of those aspects with which the research wishes to engage. Each participant in the research, whether programme participant, administrator, educator, researcher or funder, will have a particular perspective influenced by issues of class, gender, ethnicity and so forth. The rationality of critical research demands a framework which structures these perspectives.

The philosophy of adult education privileges collaboration of participants, and this is consistent with the creation of bounded rationality. The research question, and the definitional limits of its application, must be created within the research setting. Participants should be invited to reformulate the question so that it makes sense and has value for them. As this reformulation proceeds, the research project will begin to take on the rationality and the reason of the setting. Instead of assuming that the situation must be improved, the researcher should be open to understanding why the whole situation is the way that it is. In what way is it understood by those people who participate in the situation every day, and how do they make sense of it?

Moving from transcendence to located agency does not diminish the strength of critical theory. It lodges critical moments within historical situations and recognises that the human condition is contingent. Research becomes an explicit process of creation in which both the research problem and the problem of research are explored.

Conclusion

In this paper I have offered a heuristic reworking of the boundary between critical and postmodern social theory, and discussed some of the implications of that reworking for the adult education researcher. The site of research must be viewed as an area of bounded rationality within a diverse and complex social field. Universal claims to transcendence and emancipation must be avoided in recognition of postmodern critique, and knowledge generation must be seen as a local and contingent process based on agency and transformation.

In neofunctionalist times it is essential that adult educators step out of the theoretical and start to engage with the issues of practice, so that empirical work is not dominated by an instrumental focus. The argument in this paper is an attempt to offer a possible way to work at the boundary of the critical and the postmodern, and to move beyond the lapse of Reason.

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Factory workers informal computer learning: some observations on the effects of progressive unionism

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If we wished to extend Pierre Bourdieu's notion of cultural and educational 'capital', this paper could be said to deal with learning's *underground economy* — working class informal learning. While formal and non-formal learning are the focus of a great deal of adult education research, the learning that takes place beyond the walls of any organised classroom setting, specifically as it involves the working class, has only received sporadic focused attention (e.g. Eberle and Robinson 1980; Martin 1995; Livingstone 1997).

In this paper, I deal with computer literacy and the possible influences of progressive educational policy and practice within and through the activities of industrial unions. As in earlier work (Sawchuk 1996a; Sawchuk 1996b), this paper indicates both the substantial amount of informal computer literacy activity undertaken by Canadian industrial workers as well as the specific character of these activities. I make use of a comparative case study approach to suggest that progressive unionism can lead workers to undertake more systematic, multi-faceted and efficient overall learning projects which make critical and strategic use of a wide array of educational resources. Amongst these observations and in the tradition of others (Schurman 1989; Courtney 1992; Forrester 1995) it is clear that the workplace plays a key role in industrial workers' learning both on the job and beyond the factory gates. In this way, the information presented here may offer some insight for use by a range of researchers including those in labour education, and of course adult education more broadly. Before going into this comparative study, however, it is important that I briefly situate myself in relation to the relevant literature.

Adult learning types and power

In this study I take up the basic adult learning typologies offered by Jarvis (1987) and Candy (1991) which include collective and atomised informal, non-formal and formal learning. Briefly, formal learning generally refers to state-operated/ credentialised learning which takes place principally within a structured classroom setting. Non-formal learning on the other hand, refers to structured, classroom centred learning, but which is not directly controlled or credentialised by the state (for example, company or union courses); informal learning, however, does not centre around a structured classroom or credentials. It is composed of self or collectively-directed learning projects. Of course informal types of learning must be differentiated from notions of human development and maturation (Courtney 1992), however even with these stipulations the concept remains extremely broad and ripe for expanded critical consideration.

The central continua through which different types or sites of adult learning can be understood has been the subject of some speculation amongst adult education researcher. However, those characteristics central to the theses put forth in this paper involve the highly interrelated elements of power (whether that power involves pools of private capital, democratic action and/or bureaucratic structure), control, and surveillance. Using these basic elements, the continua would operate with state (formal) and certain corporate controlled (non-formal) learning representing sites most closely affiliated with (the relations of) concentrated social power. In contrast, isolated learning by lone individuals would represent one of the learning sites (atomised informal) least affiliated with concentrated social power.

This linkage between adult learning types and social power has some interesting implications in terms of working class informal learning particularly when considered in relation to the expansive literature regarding class reproduction within educational settings (Willis 1981; Giroux 1983; Bourdieu and Passeron 1987; Curtis, Livingstone and Smaller 1992). In other words, in light of latent material and cultural antagonisms toward those with relatively low social power (based on gender, race, class, etc.), the less powerful might prefer learning sites more suited to their *own* individual or collective control (i.e. less formalised learning) which are generally less likely to be colonised by private capital, dominant discourse(s), and/or other forms of social power.

Informal learning and progressive unionism

The seminal work of Allen Tough (1971) on informal learning projects is of major importance to this paper. He highlights, despite some basic weaknesses (Forrester *et al.* 1995), that informal learning projects, though variable in size and duration are a significant feature of people's lives. Tough's work, though regularly cited, appears to have only modestly affected the empirical programme of the adult learning/education literature as a whole. Twenty-five years later, full examinations of the variety of informal learning practices of subordinated groups such as the working class have yet to be completed. This gap in working class research is all the more remarkable in light of these general observation:

> [of eighteenth century England] The countryside was ruled by the gentry, the towns by corrupt corporations, the nation by the corruptest corporation of all: but the chapel, the tavern and the home were their own ... [here] there was room for free intellectual life and for democratic experiments with 'members unlimited'. (Thompson 1963, 56)
>
> [of 20th century Canada]The lessons of collective action by workers have traditionally been learned on the job and in the streets ... Any non-formal, structured education programs remain, even today, secondary to the learning that members gain through voluntary engagement in action. (Martin, forthcoming)

Speaking of worlds, centuries and an ocean apart, the elements of resistance to control/surveillance, and the centrality of the informal learning experiences are clearly (and historically) detectable.

A comparative case study

This comparative case study arises from the research being carried out within the *Working Class Learning Strategies in Transition: Home and Union-Based Perspectives* (WCLS) project[1]. Utilising a series of semi-structured, life-history oriented interviews (lasting between three and eight hours per subject, n=100+) the WCLS project involves six industrial workplaces all located in Canada's industrial centre, Southern Ontario. From these data comparative qualitative analysis revealed a variety of learning patterns that, among other things, pointed to differences between the unionised and non-unionised sites.

The unionised workplace of interest here is organised under one of Canada's largest and most developed unions, the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW). The CAW is arguably the most advanced Canadian union with regards to its learning/ education programming which is demonstrated through such things as its leading-edge push towards Paid Educational leave, and its modern Centre for Education and Training (Gintis 1995). The other workplace is a large non-unionised auto parts manufacturer. While there are a number of similarities between both plants — their trans-national parent companies, and their increasingly computerised production — the non-unionised plant includes none of the educational provisions of the unionised plant.

The informal computer learning patterns of workers from the two plants are best represented in detail through the descriptions of two particular interviewees — 'Sam' and 'John'[2]. Sam is in his mid-thirties and works in the unionised plant. He has worked for this same employer since his 'release' (his words) from high school at the age of 18 years with his grade 12 high school diploma. He has worked primarily on the assembly line, but is pleased to have begun a new job sampling parts. John is in his early forties and operates a computerised press at the non-unionised plant. He went to work at the age of 16 (grade 10), and has 11 years seniority at the plant.

The interviews and observational data from these and other workplaces in the WCLS project covered what could be called a learning life-history (see various other WCLS materials). Throughout, it became apparent that computer learning as the focus of a specific learning project had increasing popularity among workers. As one chemical worker from the study put it,

> Seems like every second guy at work has got one, you know, and that's the big conversation out at the smoke shack at nights, what they're doing with their computers.[3]

With workers such as Sam and John, I explored how the idea of learning computers was introduced to them, and how they came to start their learning projects. Of course, there has been a virtual information assault on the consumer concerning computers for many years through mass media, the school system, governmental programmes, etc. (Livingstone 1995); however, despite these powerful sources of influence both men said that their primary starting point was their daily and ongoing experiences within the workplace.

Here John introduces us to how he came to take on a computer learning project:

> Because I look with amazement at the stuff in the factory... When it first came in I'm lookin' at it and, 'Glory Geez! What am I getting into? Just give me my job' — you know, and then I started, 'Well, how's this work?' And then, pushing the buttons and, 'Oh! Okay!... Boy, that's easy'. And then, I move onto the next one. 'Gchoo, gchoo, gchoo. Oh, that's really easy!' You

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[1] Funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (1995-1997). Project director: Dr. David Livingstone, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, Canada.

[2] All names of interviewees and other identifying information has been changed to observe agreement to anonymity.

[3] As far as computer literacy and the general cohort to which Sam and John belong, the 11th OISE Provincial Survey (Livingstone, Hart and Davie 1998) indicates that 69% of those 35-44 years of age, 32% with incomplete high school, and 48% of those with completed high school are computer literate, that is, computing such as word processing, electronic mail, etc. Interestingly, union membership seemed to correlate with higher rates of computer literacy with 41.4% of unionised workers versus 28.2% of non-unionised industrial workers being computer literate.

know? And then move onto the next one. (John)

John's initial intimidation and later excitement with the new learning prospect is easily identified. Similarly, Sam describes the experience that he felt was pivotal in beginning his learning project:

> At work we have a computer which runs a machine and of course it has its own program but in the background it has Windows. So that was my first experience. You could get out of the program that ran the machine and you could go into Windows and work with that. Well we [him and co-workers] got ourselves in trouble a few times. And with that, you know guys would come around and different guys would have different limited experience in trying to fix the computer whenever we screwed it up, and basically that's how I got interested in it. Of course, you talk more and more with the guys because you fool around with it more and the next thing you know I bought one.

The points to be made here are that, firstly, the workplace and increasing computerisation of production are central to workers undertaking further computer learning. Secondly, the centrality of informal workplace learning leading to the decision for further learning is also clearly indicated. Both workers describe the importance of — first — learning computers informally on the job. Notably in the non-unionised plant, John does so in relative isolation. As was observed in the workplace, this is clearly a feature of the physical layout of the plant, which is representative of the wider social context or culture of the workplace. Indeed, in contrast to the collective agreement of the unionised plant, the non-unionised workplace contract provides little flexibility to work-learning processes and makes no mention of worker involvement in the formulation and delivery of training whatsoever.

Following these initial workplace-based learning experiences both men began their own expanded computer learning projects. Each project was based primarily upon collective and collaborative activities, often involving stops and intense re-starts based upon free-time within work, family and community relations. Here John outlines the importance of a highly computer literate (self-taught) co-worker 'Bob'.

> *John:* They were afraid to do it. And after awhile with the computer, I wasn't afraid to do nothin' on it, because I knew damn well there's an expert out there that can help me fix it.
>
> *i:* And the expert was your buddy?
>
> *John:* Yeah, Bob, yeah.
>
> *i:* Now if you didn't have a buddy like that, do you think you would have been as fast with it?
>
> *John:* Maybe not. Maybe not ... as bold.

John goes on to outline the general way that his computer learning project progresses citing his chief learning resources and including a description of ongoing problems around which important moments in a learning project seem to take place.

> *John:* I had a friend's computer a couple of days, and then I end up I couldn't straighten it out, so I took it to 'Gary', and he straightened it out.
>
> *i:* But he kind of learned from you, though?
>
> *John:* Yeah... But, see, he's a reader... He loves to read. I don't like to read... he's passed me like a hundred miles an hour and ... I'll go in here and I'll go to work and I'll say, 'Gary, I couldn't get this to run'. 'Alright. Well, you gotta go in and you gotta do this and this and this and change your 'config.sys' file so that this'll run, okay?'

John outlines a number of things here. Firstly, beyond his substantial, ongoing interest level in his learning project, he indicates his active use of informal workplace relations (co-worker 'Gary'). John also outlines his preference for these types of learning relations, over such things as printed material. However, as John notes this preference translates into a less efficient project in his eyes, that is, Gary the reader ... 'passed me like a hundred miles an hour'.

Sam shows similar informal learning practices in his computer learning project, and also like John, Sam prefers not to do much of his learning from printed material. Below Sam indicates the way he typically goes about advancing his learning project. Importantly, it should be noted that unlike John, Sam with his previous experience in worker-mediated training courses in his unionised workplace does what the typical manual worker usually does not (Ward and Taylor 1986; Courtney 1992; Forrester 1995) — he decides to attend a local college course on computers; but maintaining their collectivity, the group decides to attend the course together.

> *i:* What are some of the other ways you solve problems?
>
> *Sam:* Co-workers give you ideas.. they give ideas and you come home and try, but you still have to answer those questions that they don't tell you and you think 'Ah Geeze, what am I going to do here, what am I going to do here?' ... So, that's how I learn ... Guys who we talk to at work we're all the same. We're all the same guys who took the DOS level 1 and 2. Guys have different interests though. One guy is real big on the Internet; one guy is real big on reading. He reads everything possible about computers. So you got a mixture of guys.

Clearly, both projects are being carried on in earnest utilising a variety of resources though centrally the projects were fuelled by informal workplace relations and collective problem solving. However, while both efforts have been underway for comparable amounts of time, Sam and his group of unionised workers decide to expand their informal learning efforts to (collectively) include non-formal community college courses. None of the non-unionised workers within the WCLS research undertook either non-formal or formal learning within their computer learning projects — and importantly, they entertained little regret about this decision. In terms of the power, control and surveillance continua outlined in the introduction, the organised workers, moving from a position of greater and more formalised social power appear more able to expand their learning projects. The unionised workers appear more able to confidently and critically take up additional (outsider) resources for their learning project. Here Sam provides further detail as to how and why the decision to make use of more formal learning resources came about.

> *Sam:* I decided that I liked doing it but I could see that I was going to have problems all along... I started doing more computer work at work. Actual work at work. Having to go on the computer and do different things, mostly a spread-sheet like Excel. What happened was I took, I decided to take DOS level 1 and 2 with 3 other guys at work. We all went, so four of us went.
>
> *i:* And where was this?
>
> *Sam:* At the college. It was just on a Sunday, every Sunday for about ten weeks — and that taught us. Well probably about the first six or seven weeks it didn't teach us anything we didn't already know, and then the last three or four weeks it was great and we never did go back for DOS level 3. And at work because I was using the Excel spreadsheet, I took an Excel spreadsheet course [paid training through work].

It can be noted here that, like in John's case, the particular operating system at Sam's workplace was not the one taken up within the learning project. This suggests that Sam was probably not drawn into this part of his learning project simply through the direct, instrumental need imposed by the technology of his workplace. On the contrary, the degree of enjoyment, creativity, active experimentation, and of course being that workers typically chose a variety of learning content (e.g. DOS) that did not match that of the workplace (e.g. Windows) suggests motives more intrinsic than those generally discussed in the context of industrial workers. Indeed, DOS with its relatively arcane command language — described by several workers as the nuts and bolts of computer operation — was much preferred to the less intricate Windows system.

Sam goes on to suggest the influence of the workplace and union involvement in his gaining experience and comfort with more formal learning (in this case with a workplace software package).

> *Sam:* ... like Excel, I went into it. I liked it. I bugged my boss at work to get me a course because they are available, paid at work.
>
> *i:* So that was paid for?
>
> *Sam:* Because of the contract, yeah... that one was because it was directly related. It still took me six months to convince him, but I got in and it was good.

Sam had decided on the basis of his collective informal learning experience, his collective non-formal learning experience and the availability of paid training at the workplace that further courses might be an effective option.

Clearly, Sam was making extensive, even strategic, use of the different learning resources available. John and his computer learning group on the other hand, while having no access to paid computer training in the workplace did of course have access to the local community college, and yet never entertained the notion of attending. Such things as the use of facsimiles, direct on-line hook-ups, phone-calls, e-mails, workplace exchanges, etc. are all part of the alternative foundation on which the non-unionised worker computer learning network proceeds. The idea of making selective use of non-formal learning resources is simply not an option that is actively considered.

Discussion and implications

> Those who have not completed high school and those who occupy manual, blue-collar occupations are far less likely to be represented among the ranks of the educationally participating. It is a phenomenon whose socio-economic structure has hardly altered since the first systematic surveys documented the relationship in the late 1920s. (Courtney 1992, 5)

If we are to take the next step in qualifying the *'them-who-has-gets'* pattern of adult education which has dominated adult education in both North America and the UK (Training Agency 1989) for the better part of a century — then clearly we must take steps to critically expand our notion of learning and empirically follow this expansion towards subordinated groups such as the working class. This study has attempted to take up this very task. As Livingstone et al. (1997) indicate, class learning distinctions appear to melt away when attempts are made to include those sites of learning less associated with concentrated social power, that is, informal learning.

This paper goes one step further in beginning to indicate further important mediations — specifically the possible effects of progressive unionised versus non-unionised workplaces. Again, the Livingstone *et al.* (1997) data indicate that while there appears to be some differences in the total weekly hours spent on informal learning between unionised versus non-unionised industrial workers (13.6 hours for unionised, 11.6 hours for non-unionised) — perhaps the real difference between the two groups lies in what else is involved in their learning projects. These data also indicate that unionised industrial workers are almost twice as likely to take part in an adult/continuing education course (27.1% versus 16%); that participation involved a much broader scope of agencies/institutions attended among union members; and, that unionised workers are far less likely to bear sole financial burden of non-formal learning.

Of course this paper sought to add a qualitative dimension to the understanding of these adult learning experiences, and throughout the case study data, the importance of both informal learning and extended workplace relations are clearly indicated. Specifically following the central theses of this paper, the data is suggestive of the effects of progressive unionism on workers' learning projects which extend beyond the factory gates. While both groups of workers were seen to be capable and energetic informal learners, making use of collective and collaborative, local, intra-class networks — the unionised workers demonstrated a greater willingness to critically and strategically make use of such non-formal learning as company courses and the local community college.

The more general notion of power, control and surveillance inherent in any particular learning site, and its relationship to the learning among subordinate groups is too general to be borne out of the data presented in this paper alone. Nevertheless, if there is any validity to the use of the basic (interlinked) continua put forth in this paper, the development, study and support of informal learning should be viewed with some trepidation among workers and their allies. The examination and formalisation of informal, previously hidden, practices obviously holds the potential for increased surveillance, appropriation and subsequent loss of worker control. In this way, as was done by those who took part in this research, the relations of educational practice and knowledge production involving informal learning must be entered into with a good amount of caution.

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The HRD factory: an historical inquiry into the production of control in the workplace

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> Many whips are inside men, who do not know how they got there, or indeed that they are there. In the movement from authority to manipulation, power shifts from the visible to the invisible, from the known to the anonymous. And with rising material standards, exploitation becomes less material and more psychological.
> (C. Wright Mills)

Over the last few decades Human Resource Development (HRD) has emerged as the predominant framework for discussing what used to be called training and development. Embedded within human capital theory, in some quarters HRD has become synonymous with workplace learning. The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) has become the main force for workplace education in the United States, arguing that in order for the nation to compete globally, HRD must play a central role (Carnevale 1988). American HRD academics have created their own research journal, Human Resource Development Quarterly, claiming that HRD is a profession with its own body of knowledge, and arguing that HRD is an emerging interdisciplinary academic field. In 1993 the rather pretentiously named Academy of Human Resource Development was formed to '... encourage systematic study of human resource development theories, processes, and practices ...' (Academy of Human Resource Development 1996). Failing to situate HRD in its sociohistorical context, many of the histories are little more than hagiographic reports with HRD viewed as the latest incarnation of an ongoing educational process where an organisation facilitates the learning of its employees. (Mech 1984, Miller 1987, Jacobson 1992).

This is not to say that the intellectual basis of HRD has not been criticised by progressive adult educators. Baptiste (1994), Rubenson (1992), and Cunningham (1993), among others, have pointed out that the economic rationale for HRD, human capital theory, is much more problematic than its advocates suggest and may not lead directly to increased productivity and economic growth. Foley (1992) has strongly critiqued the notion of a supposedly massive shift to post-Fordist forms of production, arguing instead that workplace reorganisation is a technical rather than an historical process. Thus, according to Foley, the goal of capitalism remains the same: 'the extraction of more of the surplus of workers' labour, and the further accumulation of capital' (125).

There is, however, another dimension to HRD that is equally important. This dimension connects earlier forms of training and development with newer forms and predates human capital theory. The rest of this paper discusses the connection between HRD and human relations training by defining the field and its professional roots, examining the origins of control, and analysing the new human relations.

Defining the field from within: HRD as human relations

Just what constitutes HRD and its intellectual origins has been subject to debate. For *Training and Development*, ASTD's primary journal, HRD is a seamless web dating from the beginning of the industrial revolution until the present (May 1994). For most others, however, defining HRD has been less clear. Frank (1988) attempts to classify HRD as a 'helping' field, suggesting its theories and research are based on adult education, that it is conducted in organisational settings, and that its purpose is to change the behaviour of individuals purportedly to improve job performance. Jacobs (1990) argues that HRD is an interdisciplinary field resting on four bodies of knowledge: education (particularly adult learning), systems theory, psychology, and organizational behaviour. This knowledge leads to the fundamental mission of HRD, the improvement of organisational performance through the development of employee capabilities. Chalofsky (1992) suggests that a unifying definition of HRD is the study and practice of increasing the learning capacity of individuals, groups, collectives, and organisations through development and application of learning-based interventions for the purpose of optimising human and organisational growth and effectiveness. Wimbiscus (1995) locates the origins of HRD: 'The field has its beginnings in management principles (Taylorism), productivity improvement (Hawthorne studies), and teamwork and group dynamics (Tavistock Institute and T-groups)' (5). In the first issue of *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, Swanson (1990) succinctly states: the conceptual framework of HRD is human capital theory and human development.

The emphasis on psychology in HRD is not new. A review of *The Journal of Industrial Training*, the predecessor of ASTD's present journal, makes clear that the psychological and behavioural approach to training is central to how worker training is conceived. For example, in 1950, a survey of ASTD training directors found that human relations training was the greatest area of emphasis (Guyon 1950).

What all the above definitions have in common are the guiding pillars of HRD — human capital theory and human relations theory. And human relations theory, the rest of this paper will argue, inevitably involves issues of control. Moreover, it is the use of human relations techniques that form the central struggle over control in the workplace. From this perspective, HRD can be seen as a system of control embodied in a relatively new economic theory, human capital theory, and an old approach to controlling workers, human relations theory.

The HRD factory: Taylorism, the Hawthorne studies and the production of control

The most influential way of organising work has been scientific management. Based on the works of Frederick Taylor, scientific management (or Taylorism) applied 'science' to organising work. Traditional worker skills were replaced by scientific analysis. Jobs were broken down into their smallest parts, job tasks were strictly defined, and hierarchical structures provided logical rational means of control. All problems would give way to technical solutions. Efficiency and rationality became the gods of industry. Central to this notion was control. As Taylor stated:

> It is only through enforced standardisation of methods, enforced adoption of the best implements and working conditions, and enforced co-operation that this faster work can be assured. And the duty of enforcing the adoption of standards and enforcing this co-operation rests with the management alone. (83)

Taylorism, however, was more than just a narrow efficiency model for production. Taylorism opened the door for the scientific study of human behaviour. The famous Hawthorne studies, conducted at the Western Electric plant near Cicero, Illinois were the first to apply scientific study of human behaviour in industry. In the Hawthorne studies Elton Mayo and his associates 'discovered' that psychological factors were important for increasing production. Workers were now seen not as just economic entities but as social individuals with psychological needs and interests. Rather than a reaction against Taylorism, the Hawthorne studies and the entire human relations movement in industry can be seen as bringing science, in the form of psychology, into the realm of human relations on the shop floor. The human factor in production became subject to scientific investigation through the new discipline of industrial psychology.

The Hawthorne studies, the foundational building block of the entire human relations movement, have come under frequent and consistent attack for both their managerial bias and methodological problems Bramel and Friend (1981) described the studies as being one of the creation myths of industrial psychology. They point out that Mayo's advocacy of human relations was a justification for manipulating workers in such a way that as a group the workers supported 'good' directions at work (those defined by management) versus a group that was turned against management. Clegg and Dunkerly (1980), and Rose (1975), have attacked Mayo for not understanding the historical and social context of the research, thus portraying workers as illogical and irrational. Gillespie (1991), in the most thorough review of the Hawthorne studies, makes the point that Mayo and his colleagues approached their research with some very strong managerial assumptions. He notes that they assumed , but did not demonstrate, that happier workers work harder, equating worker satisfaction with higher levels of production. They also assumed that workers were not able to organise collectively and deliberately to reshape work practices in positive ways, taking for granted complete managerial control of the workplace. As Gillespie notes:

> Human relations told managers that no matter how much they might be forced to bargain with unions over wages and conditions, workers' basic understanding of the workplace was flawed by their specific psychological needs and their personal situation. ... Human relations confirmed managerial assumptions that only management was able to assess what was best for both the company and its workforce. (238)

Rose (1975) succinctly points to the implications of this managerial ideology:

> What, after all, could be more appealing than to be told that one's subordinates are non-logical; that their unco-operativeness is a frustrated urge to collaborate; that their demands for cash mask a need for approval, and that you have a historic destiny as a broker of social harmony. (124)

If human relations laid the groundwork for managerial control, then it was the social conditions during and after the second world war that led to the creation of ASTD and the profession of human resource development.

Roots of the profession: ASTD and training to control

Founded in 1942 at a meeting of the American Petroleum Institute, the American Society for Training Directors began publishing its journal in 1945. By the end of the 1940s training was an important component of many of the newly created personnel departments.

A major task during World War II was training the large numbers of workers entering the workforce.

The National Defense Advisory Commission established a massive Training-with-Industry (TWI) programme to assist in preparing the new workforce. The men who provided leadership for this Commission later became important inspirations for the creation of the American Society of Training Directors (later Training and Development) and represented the cream of corporate power and prestige: C. R. Dooley, industrial relations director manager of Socony-Vacuum Oil, and J. Walter Dietz, personnel relations manager of Western Electric. TWI had several different components, one of which was a Job Relations program based on human relations principles. It is significant that Dietz designed this large scale Job Relations training for supervisors. Familiar with the Hawthorne experiments that had been done at his company's plants (Dietz even hired some of the original Hawthorne researchers to work on this project), the Job Relations program provided human relations training to almost 500,000 supervisors. In 1945 Dooley and Dietz won the first human relations award from the American Management Association (Dietz 1970, Dooley 1945, Kirkpatrick 1945).

The issue for unions centered on labor's refusal to agree to any specific functions that were exclusively management's. Everything was open for negotiations, including the right to manage. The end result would be, so the unions hoped, joint management with worker control of the shopfloor. The Congress for Industrial Organisations (CIO) advocated a policy that would make unions and management equal, with the government acting as an arbitrator. The newness of these demands provoked uneasiness within the existing generations of managers. First the depression and then to some extent the war had confined the unions ability to move beyond such 'bread and butter' issues as wages, hours, vacations and the rudiments of grievance and seniority systems. Now with the end of the war, industrial management was confronted with new challenges from the unions. The challenge to management centred around personnel issues. Unions demanded (successfully, in some industries) the right to participate in discipline, bonus charges, job assignments, and training and education programmes. Unions wanted involvement in financial policy, wage determination policies, and other production issues as well. Unions, in short, sought to co-manage the enterprise (Nelson 1995, Brody 1993, Jacoby 1985, Brody 1980).

The wartime shortage of labour caused many grievances and attempts to create more equitable work conditions. The shopfloor became a site of struggle. Indeed, the unionisation movement swept thorough the ranks of foremen, the frontline managers. In 1946 one study quoted a management official saying 'We recognise that in some of our shops the union committeeman exercises greater authority than the foreman.' An automobile executive stated 'If any manager in this industry tells you he has control of his plant he is a damn liar' (in Brody 1980, 181). American industry felt itself embattled on every level. Unions felt that they had a right to bargain regarding all functions of management, including training. In some industries it was shop stewards who decided how rates were set and who received training.

The co-management of enterprises did not occur. While the reasons for this are complex, the refusal of large corporations to surrender at any cost their management function largely revolved around personnel issues. That is, in return for dramatic increases in wages, and strong pension, health, and vacation plans, attempts at co-management were surrendered. However, the personnel function itself was totally under the control of management. In addition while the amount of the benefits were negotiable, the control and administration functions were under management, specifically under the personnel departments' control. Modern training grew out of this context; training became a personnel function organised and operated according to corporate interests (Schied 1995).

Human relations training fit well with the newly emerged personnel function. Because unions were now removed from personnel decisions, organisations managed, controlled, and trained the workforce. Motivating workers and shaping their behaviour became an effective way to control workers. As Baritz in the classic *Servants of Power* (1960) stated:

> Through motivation studies, through counselling, through selection devices calculated to hire only certain types of people, through attitudinal surveys, communication, role playing, and all the rest in the bag of schemes, social scientists slowly moved towards a science of behaviour. A new slick approach to the problem of control. Authority gave way to manipulation, and workers could no longer be sure if they were being exploited. (209).

HRD and the 'new' human relations

HRD is couched in the language of worker participation, empowerment, and participatory management, but actually masks a new way to control workers. Organisations want workers who are responsible, adaptable, enterprising problem solvers with appropriate communication skills, thinking skills, and the capacity for lifelong learning all wrapped up in team and quality approaches to work. Adopting the human relations approach, contemporary and sophisticated management theories and processes such as total quality management (TQM) and ISO9000, focus on changing worker participation as a means to control and restructure large segments of the American workforce (Schied, Carter, Preston, and Howell 1997, Howell, Preston, Schied, and Carter 1996).

Workers are asked to develop new attitudes on the job, hidden by the language of skills. Language itself is framed within psychological notions of control (Gee, Hull, and Lankshear 1996). Workers need to co-operate and part with rules that constrain the range of work individuals do. Workers must exhibit a willingness to accept increased responsibility for 'soft' skills. The so-called 'soft' skills, Noble (1990) has argued, are largely an assault on worker protection to ensure adaptability to corporate decisions concerning products, markets, production process, and technologies in a global economy. Grenier (1988) has called this form of control 'de-bureaucratised control.' He states that '...the trick is to make workers feel that their ideas count, and their originality is valued while disguising the expansion of managerial prerogatives into the manipulative area of pop psychology' (131).

This type of psychological approach has its roots in human relations, updated by the language of HRD. Thus employees' values are to be made congruent with an employer's organisational values through the use of HRD techniques and practices. Contemporary flatter organisations result in centralisation of power stripping away layers of bureaucracy, leaving top managers even more in control of information and workers. Worker empowerment is limited to decision making within norms established by the organisation. Although teams are allowed to organise their work, it is only within pre-existing guidelines and values. Finally, HRD with its emphasis on psychological versus Taylorist forms of control seeks to restrict both informal relationships in the workplace and the pursuit of alternative actions. If both workers and management are 'in this together' then issues of power and issues of who controls whom are hidden under the cloak of unitary goals. Workplace control, in this form, can now be the province of teams. Thus the team now controls workers who do not produce, do not buy into TQM, or exhibit a poor attitude. Therefore vertical control has been replaced by horizontal control with peer pressure operating through teams as members sanction and correct those who jeopardise or criticise established guidelines. The result, as this paper has argued, is a new and powerful form of psychological control masked in humanistic language of human relations.

Conclusion

Increasingly the boundaries of workplace learning have been defined by HRD. This paper has presented an emergent analysis of the origins of HRD as it relates to the production of control and the shifting historical boundaries among production, psychology, and workplace education. This historical analysis begins to unravel the contradictions of adult education practice in the workplace. The initial inquiry suggests that control issues in HRD have moved into more subtle forms of psychological manipulation calling into question the claim that HRD empowers workers. Therefore, any disagreement with the goals and values of management are interpreted as character flaws located in the individual worker. As C. Wright Mills (1956) so keenly observed, exploitation has become less visible and more psychological.

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Grieving as a dynamic process in transformation

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Grieving in the last 25 years has increasingly been seen as a healthy process in the face of significant events in one's life. Loss of parents or close loved ones, immigration from one culture to another, urban relocation, and job loss can begin processes of grieving. What is it that we are grieving? What is lost and why is grieving a seemingly important process if we are to grow?

While many of life's events are traumatic and triggers (Mezirow 1991) for transformation, it will be the contention of this article that grieving is integral to transformation. The process involves both rational and extra-rational notions of change. Transformation requires that something is changed that was old and replaced with the new. The letting go process of grieving the old is interpreted from two very different paradigms, the critical social theory and the analytical depth psychology, in transformation literature. In this essay the two orientations are compared and contrasted particularly in the way grieving seems to occur in the actual process of transformation itself and in what is changed in transformation.

Brief background of the two orientations

Critical social theory

Critical social theory (CST) surfaced in earnest after the outbreak of WWII in the USA with the writings of German expatriates such as Marcuse and Adorno in what is now known as the Frankfurt School. The fundamental assumptions of CST are that the social structures and collective culture shape reality and individual identity. Critical theorists tend to initiate their inquiry from the level of material and social conditions, focusing on the disjuncture between how those in power claim things are and how things actually are. The analysis is a macro-analysis of socio-economic and political phenomena that keep people in control or in bondage to a particular ideology; that is, which constrains their freedom of movement, expression, and/or lifestyle. An example below illustrates how a critical social theory analysis might proceed.

Women are told their work is valued, but in reality, they are seldom compensated for their labour in the home or community. Non-paid work of women in the home, volunteer work in the community, or additional work beyond paid work in the workplace, has traditionally been discounted in statistics on market value. Economic value is only placed on forms of labour that generate money or income. However, emphases are shifting away from non-paid work to paid work as market value: i.e., women are paying for childcare, what they did for free before; community leadership activities formerly performed by volunteers are being incorporated into the social service sector as paid work; and professionals are working longer hours, sacrificing their health and well-being, when countless numbers are unemployed. In recent history, as countries experience economic recession there is a resurgence of interest in these forms of 'work'. Having lamented the loss of cultural value for child-rearing, volunteer work, and going beyond the call of duty, we are now being asked to entertain these notions again, this time, however, the motivation is different.

While the political agenda which motivated a move into labour as market value was a socio-technical, market driven economy, the new agenda is a neo-liberal agenda blended with neo-conservative values. In the 1990s now that jobs are being eliminated under the guise of reducing the interest on debts to nation states, there is a push to recover 'family values' by reifying old values of women staying home to look after children and the hearth. It is a move to legitimate the growing unemployment rates which are directly due to reduction in spending. What women longed for in social prestige in the work force is now being stripped aside as they are encouraged to go back into isolation as neo-liberals attempt to elevate unpaid work as a value in society.

Retreat back into what is a familiar value system could be viewed as a kind of grieving for what is being lost in an increasingly complex and diverse postmodern society: loss of jobs, loss of prestige, loss of income, loss of a higher quality of life based on that income. Critical social theory, then, is mainly concerned with social conditions that are oppressive and stultifying, rather than the transitions to a more liberating state. The concern is what is just and best for society and how the various subjectivities, race and gender, can live together in the same cultural, moral and ethical space. One can be enlightened and develop a sense of what is just in society when trends and cultural shifts are made apparent; one is enlightened when one can explain with a sense of justice what seems to be inarticulate before. While unrelentless social critique aims to uncover the way things really are for the betterment of society, there is also a growing awareness on the part of the individual that she has been deluded to 'see' in naive ways. Thus, in critical social theory there is both a personal theory of self as well as a social theory aimed at transforming social structures that inhibit and constrain us.

However, the way social theorists view personal transformation is either as a dialectic in social interaction/action or as a by-product of the social forces at play (Scott and Schmitt-Boshnick 1994). We do not see correctly; we are deluded as citizens and act in naive or ineffectual ways as we deny the power of the controlling forces in society to dictate our behaviour. The individual is subsumed in the social collective. While critical social theorists would argue that it is important to develop a sense of agency, this is often confounded as empowerment, a capacity or ability to act, is frustrated by the complexity of the issues which paralyses our knowing what to do. What we seem to be experiencing is massive resignation in society, particularly as organised community action from groups is systematically being undermined by governments and political systems.

Analytical depth psychology

In contrast, an analytical depth psychology orientation focuses on the personal aspect of transformation. It began with the writings of Carl Jung, in a split with Freud over the issue of dreams and transference as instrumental in the therapy process. The aim of personal transformation from this orientation is to expand consciousness itself or change personality through conscious awareness of the individuating process. Jung expanded the psyche to include not only the personal unconscious recognised by Freud but also the collective unconscious. It is important at explicate the structure of the self from the two orientations.

The self

The self, as understood by critical social theorists and society-at-large, is viewed as primarily a rational entity and comes from a well formed ego whose primary function is to promote rational capacities. However, the ego is subject to delusion and is situated both in conscious cognitive awareness as well as the personal unconscious. The personal unconscious is the house of undeveloped potential, knowledge not ready for cognitive awareness, or unfulfilled dreams. It is just below our conscious awareness but nevertheless is known although unacknowledged to the self. In contrast, analytical depth psychologists maintain the structure of the Self (a more holistic Self) also includes the collective unconscious which is often only accessible through the images in dreams, slips in speech, in projections, and is central to the facilitation of personal transformation. The collective unconscious is considered more vast and powerful than ego rationality. It is extra-rational, has a language of its own and is intensely personal and unique to each person. Transformation is not a rational process, although it includes rational abilities, and cannot be pushed or planned for as in a goal-oriented, rational process.

There seems to be a time when the collective unconscious is more available to us, when our egos are strong enough to handle the mind waves that engulf us from the unconscious, and that time may be at midlife. The first half of life is important for developing that strong ego by encouraging us to be successful in a chosen career, to manage a growing family, and to contribute to the development of community life. These strengthen our sense of control and affirm a way of doing things that are in harmony with our surroundings. However, at times in our lives, at midlife in particular, at dislocation or at job loss, what is lost, besides the tangible loss of youth, home or work, is ego control. The rational ego has learned to be 'in charge' and it feels like it is no longer in control; now it has to interact with internal images or fantasies that actually seem to be more powerful.

An example

An example of grieving from an analytical depth orientation is found in Shaheen Sheikh's masters thesis (1997). Sheikh interviewed in depth two medical doctors who immigrated from Pakistan and India, one to the United States, the other to Canada. Both came to North America because of the advanced education that these countries could offer their children and families. Both, however, experienced extreme dislocation of time and place that plummeted them into a profound grieving process for loss of home and culture. The prestige of being a medical doctor back home was stripped away as it became difficult to step into the medical profession in the new world. Long periods of unemployment displaced their identity which spiralled them into a grieving over the death of the old self. Fortunately, family obligations grounded them as they experienced 'great shedding, a sloughing off of much weight: mistakes, roads not taken, chances lost forever, dreams that did not materialise' (p. 37). And with these 'they took with them a small piece of my heart' and a feeling from each one that she became 'qualitatively less than my previous self'. The doctors in Sheikh's study began to glimpse a new journey that called to them but it 'was accompanied by fear of losing control, loss of the known ... signs of anxiety, irritability with self and others, feeling trapped, physical aches and pains, changes in sleep patterns, impulsiveness were reported' (p. 41). Only gradually did the cognitive, rational faculties of critical self reflection recognise that the freedom they craved in the new world was a function of the head, not the whole body and soul. A coming together of the head and the body was necessary for them to challenge the status quo identity they brought with them to the new culture. While critical social theorists focus on letting go of frames of reference that have been outmoded or uncritically assimilated (Mezirow 1991), a depth orientation focuses on profound emotional experiences that force us to grieve the loss of what used to be a meaningful state of being into another one that is deeper, wiser, and more in tune with matter, the body and soul, and the material world in physical reality.

Living from a depth orientation is understood as a mythical journey that is played out in various ways depending on life's circumstances. One lives a particular way, dies to that way in time through a decaying process or deconcretisation of the ego and is rebirthed in a different form. Internal images might be of undressing which is a disincarnation of the body-ego, the end of one form of body-ego existence and the revelation of the hidden Self (Perera 1981). Most critical theorists do not see it this way; they view the development of the faculty of rationality in the ego structure as the ultimate in development. Sardello (1995) describes the ego as being 'always oriented toward the past, toward trying to hold on to what it has received from the past. Thus, the ego acts like a 'finished' structure of consciousness, one that is complete; but since it is really not complete, it must continually seek affirmation that it is by acting like an *is* rather than a becoming' (pp. 103-104). The life-death cycle of the mythic journey attempts to integrate the ego with the non-rational unconscious to form what Sardello calls the 'I'. While it is possible to enjoy life on the basis of 'thoughts that have already been thought, feelings that have already been felt, and actions that have become habitual' (p. 105), that is, living life from the ego, the soul or sacred 'I' desires the new. The longing of the soul comes from the future, that which is yet to come or is eternal or is another level of being. This comes to us as an unknown, and the soul continues to glimpse in the individuation process a coming to be that is different than before.

The way transformation occurs

Grieving is a term that connotes loss, a loss of a loved one, of a place, of a space in time, or of a way of making meaning that seemed to work in the past. But also there is loss of a connection or roots to the soul and is experienced as a longing and wanting to let go of what stands in the way. It's one of the most potent of the processes involved in both a rational and extra-rational transformation. (See Boyd and Myers 1988, for receptivity, recognition, and grieving as processes in transformation.) It is easiest to see a grieving process in a person when an external event, like a mother dying, precipitates emotion that seems overwhelming. But grieving is also an existential phenomenon which occurs any time meaning perspectives (Mezirow 1991) are challenged or when there is transition in the life-death cycle. A loss is perceived, a loss of something familiar in the past that seemed to work or was integral to the constellation of that life. This loss compels humans to react in several ways. To facilitate transformation from a rational perspective, we talk to someone and use dialogue as a way to sort out the meaning of our loss.

To facilitate transformation from a depth perspective, we explicate internal and subjective experience, rather than external, objective experience. That does not mean that we do not seek helpers in the grieving process, but since the process is fundamentally extra-rational and intensely personal, the 'sitting' (listening or waiting) with the images requires us to descend into a kind of darkness. This is the descending fall which seems like regression in Wilbur's (1986) navigation through to transformation. It is going deeper into the Self. This requires a breaking through of the shell of the rational ego structure to permit the active attention needed on emerging images and fantasies erupting into consciousness. These images were there before but we either did not take time to acknowledge them or to relate to them. The ego needs to be quieted before the internal images can be attended to and this requires a readiness, willingness, and openness for this to occur. An ethereal or subtle body is related to this shell and may encapsulate the ego. The subtle body experiences things through the skin and subsequently the muscles and holds the information there. Through body work, breath work, ego quieting, and internal work with images that emerge in dreams and fantasies, the grieving process commences. 'It permits suffering through to gestate a new solution in its own way and its own time. Healing occurs then not only because the meaning or image is found, but because the process of life is given attention and empathetic presence and a mirroring that touches it wherever it is' (Perera 1981, 74). Every cell of the body becomes alive in grieving a loss, and 'within each of us exists a deep and uncontrollable sobbing that has not, for most, come to the surface as yet. When a loved one dies, grieving never ceases; it becomes a permanent aspect of life, but at the same time it can be the activation of a conscious soul life' (Sardello, 92).

The processes of transformation

The processes of transformation are also different according to both social theorists and analytical depth orientations. One requires critical reflection while the other attempts discernment. Critical theorists have identified a dialectical process in critical reflection where arguments are assessed in a dialectical manner which uncovers the essence of the meaning. There is an interrogation of both the social text occurring in the external milieu and the personal text as issues are problematised. This occurs primarily in dialogue, a social participatory engagement with facts, observations, and external experience. Through dialogue, individuals in groups can determine to what extent they hold a similar rational framework or meaning perspective that is congruent with what is being discussed.

Interpretation is fundamental to meaning assigned to events and problems and it is derived by group consensus. This is fundamentally a rational process. However, depth theorists view images that erupt in dreams and fantasies as more powerful or potent to assess. This assessment is both interpreted and *related to*. Thus, a relationship with one's internal images becomes the material for changing one's external behaviour. Similar to the quality of relationships with others, quality of relationship to one's internal images fosters a love of self, beauty, and one's external environment. As Jung has said, no one who has discovered his/her internal Self has willingly engaged in murder or acts of horror.

Depth theorists are mostly interested in differentiation, the sword of Damocles cutting through to what is important to preserve and what is important to negate (life and death). It is on a different plane, not on issues, frameworks, paradigms or discourses, but on a feeling and somatic level. While social theorists differentiate socially, depth theorists act primarily in an 'alone' process which requires deep pre-linguistic sitting, a type of reflection which is not necessarily related to language. It is a meditative act. Through the action of bringing into conscious cognitive awareness the internal images and attempting to relate to them, engaging with them, not being horrified or shocked by them, has a deepening affect. The images mirror what is happening in our external life and the aim is to facilitate the *interaction* between the unconscious and the conscious so that what happens internally relates or is aligned with what happens externally. This helps us walk with the flow of life rather than in resistance or in a sleeping state.

What is changed

What is changed is different in the two orientations as well. In the rational process there is an inter-subjective clash of various subjectivities such as feminist or antiracist, might provoke clarity on what one does think (frame of reference) about certain issues under review. Through the clash of ideas and orientations (conflict), one is forced to decide, alter or retain, what his/her framework, meaning perspective, or belief is. What is changed is a cognitive meaning structure, a way of making meaning, at the level of the brain. It is transformation in seeing and while it does involve an emotional reaction since we often are quite wedded to our belief systems, it involves different emotions in the depth orientation. The discerning process requires that individuals take time to settle with what is experienced as dissolution. What is changed is consciousness itself and the flow of consciousness which now includes both that which we are aware of and that which we are not aware of. Whereas before we sensed with our senses, during a grieving process our bodies as a whole become alive, at the cellular level as well as the surface.

The reflective stance is not on becoming critically aware but rather simply to *become aware* of the essential in life that is going on not only in the external world but in the interior world as well. Grieving provides the opportunity for this to happen, as rationality no longer works. Pain is an ingredient that is present in this orientation and is often discounted as legitimate or even necessary in our 'be happy', 'positive thinking' cultural reality. Ultimately this can be quite enlightening as the letting go process alleviates the burden and darkness of pain. Rather than deny grieving it is in our best interest to engage it, sink into it, in order to move ourselves forward.

Conclusion: relationship of the personal to the social

There is criticism of taking a personal view of transformation from critical social theorists. Because of the intensely personal nature of the enterprise, they criticise personal work because it takes individuals away from work on a humane social agenda. It also seems to over-emphasise individual aspects of learning as fundamentally more important than group learning and action. However, without personal work, action is skewed and the body denied and what is unbalanced will crop up in undesirable ways.

And, there is a radical change that occurs in the social environment when individuals refuse to project unacknowledged material often perceived as wants and needs, onto others. The basic unit of analysis has to be the individual in a group, in the make-up of those in institutional settings and in governmental bodies. Groups make decisions but they are dependent on the quality of the individuals in those groups. When internal images become discerned and awareness of the individuating process occurs on the personal level, a relationship with Self changes behaviour in the social group. A break with the collective by one being aware of her/his individuating process, disempowers the social control that the group exerts over individuals. Dialogue and reflection is possible to complete the transformation on meaning perspectives but prior to the cognitive what is needed is the dark work in the interior world.

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The white in the I: constructions of difference and adult education

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> ACE[1] aims to provide opportunities to improve the knowledge, skills and quality of life for adult Australians. ... ACE increases opportunities especially for adults with special needs who are under-represented in employment and training, (MCEETYA 1993, 4).

> No longer can whiteness, maleness or heterosexuality be taken as the ubiquitous paradigm, simultaneously centre and boundary (Ferguson 1990, 10).

This paper represents work in progress on the theme of the subject in adult education. It is concerned with situating theories of learning and adult education in the context of the raced, gendered and classed conditions of learners' lives. In particular I draw on notions of community education currently circulating in Australia, but I believe my points are reflected in the broader literature on adult education. McIntyre (1995, 178) drawing on Raymond Williams's work notes that community seems to lack any negative or opposing term. Furthermore Australia's fourth sector, adult community education, seems to have displaced the term adult education in a 'communitarian discourse (which) imposes a sense of harmony and unity in the face of disharmony and fragmentation' (McIntyre 1995, 181).

Agreed features of this sector include: a learner-centred and consumer driven philosophy; responsiveness to (local) communities; accessibility and inclusiveness with particular reference to specific target groups; diversity of offerings, providers and pathways to work; and flexibility especially in terms of delivery issues such as time, place, methods and entry/exit levels (Kelly Associates 1997, 16-18). But these features are problematic and I have concerns about the degree to which they implicitly suggest that ACE meets all needs. My concerns are more sharply focused by the question *Who is the adult in adult education?*

To use Patti Lather's (1996) expression, I want to 'trouble' that adult body in ways which will help me to understand the ongoing formation of adult education as a discipline and the positioning of Australian ACE within that discipline. While the scope and possibilities of this work are too large to be fully debated here I want to use this paper as an opportunity to explore the contradictory and problematic aspects of an education system which frames learners in terms of a relation of difference.

Who is the adult in adult (community) education?

In adult community education the learner is often framed as a generic subject, devoid of race, class and gender, and yet often assumed to be white and male. Policy documents in Australian settings also frame adult community education as an opportunity for adults who have special needs. An analysis of such policy reveals that adults with special needs are primarily those from disadvantaged and/or ethnic/indigenous backgrounds. The discourse of multiculturalism with its features of tolerance and diversity are prominent in this framing. It is a discourse which pluralises the notion of identity but leaves in place the unified concept of self and the binary framing of self/Other (Scott 1992). At the same time it gives scant attention to many of the mainstream values inherent in adult education programs and upon which the notion of 'effective participation' in Australian society relies[2]. Much of the work that finds its ways into adult education bibliographies and readings for courses which train adult educators is steeped in these same values and reflects conservative androcentric conceptions of adult learning[3] As a consequence much adult education literature promotes assumptions about adult learners which reinforce the following:

- a stable self modelled on conceptions of intentional and autonomous decision making and rational action emanating from these decisions
- a self defined in terms of reified concepts of adult development and linear models of maturation
- understandings of identity which are constrained by unitary categories (female/male, *or* Aboriginal /non-Aboriginal, *or* able-bodied/disabled) rather than the cross-hatched ways (for example white-able-bodied-hetero-sexual-fe/male self) in which we live our lives
- the absent presence of whiteness as the invisible norm.

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[1] In this paper I use ACE to refer to the adult community education sector commonly called the 'fourth sector' in Australian adult education.

[2] See Commonwealth of Australia (1991) and MCEETYA (1993) for examples of the discourse of 'effective participation' in Australian society.

[3] For further discussion of this issue see Davison and Gribble (1991), Hall (1993), Rockhill (1996) and Stalker (1996).

The problem of literatures that do not speak to each other

My reading of the literature thus far identifies debates about identity, subjectivity and difference informed by mixed disciplinary foundations however, much of this work remains unknown in adult education. The literature which informs Ferguson's work, quoted at the beginning of this paper, as well as many other writers (for example Ien Ang, Homi Bhabha, Stuart Hall, bell hooks, Joan Scott and Gayatri Spivak) is seldom quoted in the dominant literature of adult education. An analysis of Australian adult education literature suggests these writers have had no visible influence in matters of policy development.

The writers I mention here challenge the ideals embodied in the white (male) western canon and as I understand it they have been doing this since well before poststructural theorising became prominent in the academy. Yet in the process of decentring the western canon they warn of the erosion of any 'foundation' upon which marginalised peoples might establish a claim for changing the ways in which imperialism, colonialism and racism continue to distribute resources to the 'mythical norm ... usually defined as white, thin, male, young, heterosexual, Christian, and financially secure' (Lorde 1996, 163). In terms of feminist politics many women writing within the broad disciplines of postcolonialism and cultural studies question whether it can be guaranteed that the assumptions of a (white) feminist politics will afford a better life for people of colour of either sex (Sandoval 1991, 4). They warn against a premature closure of identity around gender politics indicating that sexism is not the only practice which constrains their lives.

Mohanty (1995, 74) proposes that treating women as an abstract category promotes the disappearance of race from the frame. Similarly Brah (1993) points to the problem of generating hierarchies of difference by reminding us that difference need not necessarily lead to division; that experience is not constituted solely within a single oppression and that cultural difference can be appropriated to build boundaries (see also Mohanty 1995, 78) as much as it might form alliances. When a politics of difference becomes the ultimate marker of subjectivity these writers warn of the many traps awaiting the theorisation of the subject.

The issue of the inadequacy of reified categories has been taken up by many white women as well. For example Spelman declares

> no woman is subject to any form of oppression simply because she is woman; which forms of oppression she is subject to depend on what 'kind' of woman she is. ... That she is subject only to sexism tells us a lot about her race and class identity (Spelman 1988).

But Spelman's insights are not the basis of dominant strands of feminist thought and the conflation of the differences among women to the one dimension is common in the adult education literature. This practice occurs as a collapsing of difference onto the generic woman student (Shore 1997, forthcoming) or as a conflating of difference-with-gender-with-women as exemplified in Edwards and Usher's (1996) paper on narratives and adult education. Whiteness tends to be an absent presence in these debates; always there yet never acknowledged. Like Roman (1993) I want to foreground the fact that 'white is a colour!'.

My interest is in the tactics, manoeuvres and processes which covertly construct the (white) subject of adult education and the implications this has for the formation of the emerging discipline. To this extent the project has a different orientation from a project which seeks to decentre whiteness. I propose that we need to make whiteness more visible, to amplify the silenced discourses in order to track the ways in which they covertly frame the discipline and pedagogic practice. My only reservation in adopting this approach is that it does not result in the reinscription of theoretical practices which stem from the 'mythical norm'.

An additional dimension of my project is to understand how such theorising might be explored in the context of *Australian* adult education. In brief, questions of 'race' and difference are inflected in our colonial relations with England, our colonising relations with Papua New Guinea, our lengthy occupation of Aboriginal land, our contentious history of immigration practices and particular inflections of gender and femininity/masculinity embedded in Australian subjectivities.

I want to examine how these issues are played out through particular tactics which result in commonsense categories of adult education which at one and the same time elide and normalise whiteness. In parallel work relating to this project I have proposed a series of five categories commonly adopted within Australian literature to describe adult education provision. In brief these categories include the construction of participants as equal partners in learning; the learner as adult rather than child; the theoretical positions informing provision for example radical, critical, feminist and/or competency-based perspectives on learning; the context in which provision takes place, exemplified in the descriptions of 'the' community, technical colleges, workplaces, and so on; and finally the range of social and cultural groups identified in government policy as the target for special programs in ACE.

In this paper space is limited therefore I will only address the latter category and examine how the construction of this category operates to normalise a particular style of 'white' adult education practice.

Adult education and 'target groups'

While definitions of community abound Australian national policy on community education avoids opting for a national definition (Schofield 1996). Kelly Associates[4] (1997) note that the 1993 Australian National Policy on ACE left the states to determine their own definition, while Schofield (1996, 11) contends that this is problematic for

> public policy, planning and resource allocation settings when 'ACE' is used loosely and interchangeably to describe a group of clients, a learning philosophy, a category of provider, an educational sector and a type of course.

Within this context the concept of target groups with special needs is a core tenet of Australian policy. It rests on the assumption of a robust centre and a struggling margin. The current Australian ACE policy identifies the following categories as adults with special needs who are underrepresented in employment and training:

- people without social and functional skills in English language, literacy and/or numeracy
- people with disabilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- people not in the paid workforce
- people who are geographically or socially isolated
- people without post-secondary education
- low income people
- immigrants and those people of a non-English speaking backgrounds

This list operates in concert with discourses of multiculturalism and disadvantage to represent ACE as a home for those people excluded from Lorde's (1996) 'mythical norm'. Those people represented by the target groups are invited to participate in ACE programs precisely because of their difference from the norm, their Other status. In community education provision, to identify target groups such as those listed in the National Policy on ACE (MCEETYA 1993) means these groups count more *only* in the sense that they are framed as 'special', and I would argue that framing includes a notion of 'deficit' in the trappings of white (male) knowledge. Their visibility is precisely a function of not being white, male, employed, or able-bodied.

But the offer of inclusion, like multiculturalism, is based on a structural ambivalence — the simultaneous operation of two conflicting wishes — which does not overturn the self/Other binary (Ang 1996). In speaking of Australia's immigration practices particularly with 'Asian' countries Ien Ang (1996, 46) notes 'we let you in despite/because of your difference' because, ultimately 'we *want* your difference'. Although as Ang points out in terms of immigration it is 'not just any difference' which is desired. Only particular kinds of difference are welcome. I suggest that these issues are also apparent in adult education provision and I contend that structural ambivalence is a central feature of adult community education. The 'offer' to participate in community education is tied up with tolerance and differential treatment accorded to the individual and to social and cultural collectives. The move to include the Other is simultaneously a move to include and resolve their difference; it ignores its assimilationist effects and at the same time seeks harmony in the move. The implications for adult education are I think, quite significant. The Other — be they community groups, individual women, unemployed people, Aborigines or Torres Strait Islanders, or even proponents of a particular theoretical tradition (for example feminist women), are invited 'home' to adult education but they must act according to the rules of the (master's) house or risk being evicted. These house rules are being established within the context of an emerging disciplinary framework. While some of the rules are explicit, and I will elaborate on these in later papers, my main concern is with the silenced discourses of whiteness and the degree to which these discourses frame what is and is not legitimate adult education.

Policy frameworks often make use of equity categories as a means of ensuring access for certain disadvantaged groups and to a certain extent they have been successful in this endeavour. For Cameron McCarthy (1995) however, this kind of reductionist identity politics, represented by the 'inclusive' list presented above, operates from a shrunken definition of humanity and ignores the production of white identities. Ien Ang (1995) believes this type of politics of inclusion results in assimilation — a desire to erase major identity markers and promote a homogenous set of cultural values and beliefs which fall in line with current mainstream patterns. Ang's solution to this is a politics of partiality which holds that 'feminism (and I would add adult education) can never ever be an encompassing political home' (1995 73).

Where to next?

My naive question *Who is the adult in adult education?* has helped me to find a way into a complex and contentious area of investigation but the literature I want to explore is fugitive. In pursuing some tentative answers to this question I have attempted to adopt 'supplementary discourses' (Friedman 1995), rather than alternative discourses which seek to provide a successor explanation for social relations. And at the moment I still feel the need for these discourse to engender an enabling culture for educators such as myself who are interested in shifting the gross inequalities which may be perpetuated by adult education (and educators/me) as much as they are by other social systems. It also seems important to me to develop analyses of these discourse which are not rooted in well intentioned assumptions to 'include' women or any other Other in the house of adult education. As Ferguson has noted

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[4] Kelly Associates, a Melbourne consulting firm, are currently facilitating a review and revision of the Australian National Policy on Adult and Community Education which will feed into the current Senate Inquiry into ACE.

> it is not too much to hope for a future in which we can recognise differences without seizing them as levers in a struggle for power. But making this future must involve us all. Men cannot dissociate themselves from 'women's issues', straight people cannot ignore the struggles of gay and lesbian people, and white people cannot declare themselves indifferent to racial politics. It is too easy for 'sympathetic' self-effacement to become another trick for quiet dominance (Ferguson, 1990, 13).

I contend that examples of sympathetic self-effacement often go unnoticed because in adult education much of the dominant literature operates from a stance which desires to make the Other visible. This involves legitimating from the centre a space in which the other can speak — where the other gets to operate or be visible only because of the largesse of the centre. I contend that issues such as gender and poverty as well as racialised experiences need to be foregrounded in adult education because they matter — not because they are part of a campaign to make the Other visible. Whiteness needs to be foregrounded too, but as I have said it is a fugitive literature and my academic investigations more often than not bump up against silence and invisibility, rather than clarity and focus. Even so this literature on 'whiteness', fugitive as it is, has had a profound impact on how I think through issues of policy and pedagogy[5]. Like McIntosh (1988, 4) I have found that 'my schooling gave me no training in seeing myself as an oppressor ... I was taught to see myself as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will'.

In view of the preceding discussion becoming answerable for what our schooling has taught us to see (Haraway 1991) and understanding that (adult) education plays a major part in perpetuating these inequitable practices, is fundamental to any pedagogical process. This is sometimes destabilising, it certainly has been for me. It is about understanding the incommensurabilities of everyday life and those uncomfortable moments of 'miscommunication' (Ang 1995) which I suspect would teach some of us more about ourselves if we but used them as the focus of our gaze rather than turning to the Other to be educated.

The challenge here I believe is twofold. First to develop an understanding of identities and subjectivities which moves beyond the individual and is at the same time aware of the centrality of individual and collective agency embedded in the modern Enlightenment project of adult education. I would humbly suggest this parallels Stuart Hall's (1996, 2-3) suggestion that cultural studies needs 'not an abandonment or abolition of the 'subject' but a reconceptualisation — thinking it in its new, displaced or decentred position within the paradigm'. It is my view that this is also what is required for the subject of adult education. In addition I think that critical discussion about notions of whiteness are well overdue. It may be time to begin to track how these discourses influence a theorisation of the subject which would take into account the issues I have been raising while not necessarily implying harmonious resolution within existing paradigms.

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[5] My indispensable colleagues Elaine Butler, Melanie Coombe and Di Shearer have also pushed me in my thinking and provided valuable support, critical challenge and references. While they have been instrumental in helping me develop my thoughts for this paper, the ideas presented are still in a very raw state.

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Commodification - some implications for the identities and professional practices of adult educators: breaching the boundaries

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> In England and Wales rampant and remorseless change, imposed from above has become a pressing and immediate feature of teachers' working lives... The British case of multiple, mandated change is perhaps an extreme one... however, it is extreme in the disrespect and disregard that reformers have shown for teachers themselves. In the political rush to bring about reform, teachers' voices have been largely neglected , their opinions overridden and their concerns dismissed ... The changes that are prevalent in Britain and the USA are also to be found in different ways in Canada, Australia, New Zealand ... and in many more nations besides. Accelerating educational change is a global phenomena. (Hargreaves 1994, 6/7)

The ongoing research upon which this paper is based, began as a qualitative study using life history interviews, into the ways in which biography shaped the identities and professional practices of a group of ten adult educators. From the stories I was told in response to our discussions about 'The Imposter Phenomenon' (Clance and Imes 1978, Harvey and Katz 1985, Arena and Page 1992), it became apparent that, 'Individual biographies are social products, private troubles frequently reflect broader structural conditions' (Brookfield 1986, 7). The structural conditions relate to, ' the governmental imperative to teach more students with fewer resources whilst maintaining quality' (McCaffery 1997). The Higher and Further Education Act (1992) in the UK instituted a new system of funding which is 'transforming education into a commodity' (Longhurst 1996, 51) and has led to the loss of four thousand five hundred jobs in the British Further Education sector since incorporation in 1993 (THES 23/8/96). These changes have profoundly affected the working lives and identities of my respondents and can be conceptualised as condition of post-modernity given Hargreaves' (1994, 96) assertion that, 'Postmodernity brings changes not only in what we experience in our organisations and institutions but also in how we experience, in our fundamental senses of self and identity'.

Commodification and its effect on professional Identities

Evidence of the effects of commodification (Grace 1989) first became apparent in the interviews when I asked my respondents whether they had experienced imposter feelings in their professional lives and under what circumstances. In response, R1 told the following story,

> At high level you cannot bluff. However much I worked if I didn't know a subject I didn't know it ... I remember going to give a lecture at -- (name of company) and I'd done an awful lot of reading. This guy in the audience started talking and I had no idea, it threw me completely. I'm here representing -- (name of college) and I'm meant to be an expert but I'm not. I really wanted to cry I felt so bad and I come back and thought I can't do this anymore, I cannot take on the responsibility of lying essentially that I am the expert in this field when I'm not ..... I didn't actually say I'm the expert but I just felt that the pressure was there that I was ..... this course is being marketed by the college as if we are experts and I'm not.

From this story R1 describes her feelings of being required to teach in an area where she did not feel she had the requisite knowledge, it was not her specialism. Her imposter feelings were related to the label of expert which she felt had been placed upon her. She had been sent out by the college to teach on a short course that the college had marketed as being staffed by experts and she felt that she had to meet the expectations of her audience.

The theme of feeling a fraud because of being required to teach outside one's specialism was also evident in R2's story.

> I can no longer call myself a specialist any more, I think that – (name of college) has done that to me, they've denied my being that person. I've become very diverse in what is being asked of me ... I had to get involved in all this ... stuff which I've got no qualifications in but I was given to teach anyway because basically there was no-one else ... I'm not the expert anymore in my field. I cannot keep up to date with all these diverse subjects ... all the groups I've seen this year have expected me to be this wonderful expert and they've asked me loads of questions I can't answer ...

This story seems to exemplify the way in which having to teach across a range of different subjects has led to a feeling of a loss of professional identity. R2 feels that she is unable to keep up to date in her subject because she has been required to diversify into other areas. In other ways also, R2 experienced a loss of professional identity.

> When I first came to – (name of college) several

> years ago I had a post which was part college and part community based. When it came to Incorporation, they just let it go, they didn't want it anymore ... I had worked really hard to build up contacts and develop a network of people in the area and basically it was like squashing everything I'd done ... now of course they are desperate for me to go out there and get contacts because they want the money, it really makes you question what your worth, I find it very distressing.

R2's feelings of demoralisation are evident in this story which reflects the ways in which the changes, brought about by government policy (that is, incorporation) have affected her professional life and sense of worth. She has been a victim of the decisions made about which courses are sufficiently profitable and both she and R1 were caught up in one area which has been identified as profitable and that this the selling of short courses to outside organisations. Their experiences would seem to corroborate a point made by Briton (1996, 42) that,

> ... entrepreneurial educators are discovering the large profits that can be secured by marketing readily consumable commodities... *Short cycle courses*, self-directed learning packages ... modularised learning systems all serve to accelerate the pace of production and consumption to maximise profits. (My emphasis).

Both R2 and R1 hold junior positions within the college hierarchy and have very little autonomy in relation to decisions about what they teach. Organisational needs have shaped their professional lives and the consequences of this are evident in their stories. Mclaughlin (1994, 22) cites autonomy as one of the vital ingredients of individual well-being in the modern world and he defines autonomy as,

> The condition in which a person can be at least part author of his [sic] life ... in respect of which his choices are not fettered by coercion ...

From the stories of R1 and R2 it is evident that there is a relationship between imposter feelings and the label of expert. In the case of R1, the label was externally imposed and in the case of R2, she wanted to be an expert in her subject but her circumstances prevented this. The stories also provide evidence of what Hargreaves (1980, 137) calls 'competence anxiety' which I would argue, has been created by feelings that the boundaries of their professional knowledge (Eraut, 1994) have been breached.

The stories of R1 and R2 can be contrasted with those of R5 (male) and R8 (female), both of whom were managers with some teaching responsibilities, and both had the autonomy to make choices about what they taught.

> Actually I don't often get asked to do things I can't do. But no, yes, I am able to make decisions about what I do. (R5)

> ... there is still an assertive streak in me which will say I'm not going to do that... I'm not going into that classroom having mugged up on this and pretend I can do it because I can't. I know that some people aren't given any choice about what they teach and that must be awful. (R8)

Whilst being a manager provided some autonomy to make choices and decisions about teaching, the role was not without its own stresses. In a discussion with R9 about the issue of bidding for contracts and the ways in which this sets up competition between institutions she said,

> One of the problems of being in a market economy is having to ensure that you are bringing in sufficient income to cover costs. The bottom line for me, I have to say is that I've got enough money to ensure that we can keep the staff we have ...

The task of 'balancing the books' becomes increasingly more difficult with reductions in government funding. McGinty and Fish (1993) and Longhurst (1996) discuss the fact that the national average level of funding per student taught is being progressively reduced and essentially, colleges are under pressure to provide more education for less money. A consequence of this has been the need for 'downsizing' which has led to situations where staff are taking on the teaching of those who have left. This can be seen in the story of R2 cited previously and R6 also described one of these situations to me,

> I was asked to do a session and I thought I don't know anything about this in terms of being able to present it to a group ... It was because there wasn't anybody else to do it, there just literally wasn't anybody else ... It's not the best way of providing the best service for the students. If they've got nitty-gritty questions they have got the right to have someone who can answer most of them ... People are being asked to do things they don't feel competent to do because we've lost staff and there aren't the people with the same skills to replace then necessarily.

The comments from R6 raise issues about quality of provision and also provide another example of a 'competence-anxiety' provoking situation which led to feelings of stress.

> People are stressed already because there are not enough hours in the day so that's pressure of time, but if you add the pressure of not feeling competent to do the job, that's more destructive ... the teaching is going to get more stressful.

A sense of demoralisation was evident in all the discussions with the main grade lecturers and in the case of R4 this was tinged with fear.

> I think of my job very differently than I used to ... I look on it as a job now ... I don't feel anyone has any interest in me apart from what they can get out of me ... I'm absolutely terrified

> of what is going on here, just watching what is happening to this environment we work in and what is being asked of us. I just cannot equate education and money ...

It concerned me that this part of the interviews generated a lot of emotion both for the respondents and for myself, but it would be wrong to give the impression that they had just passively accepted what was happening to their professional lives. Contained within the stories was a sense of agency in the strategies they adopted to deal with the changes they were experiencing.

Strategies

I discussed with my respondents how they managed situations in the classroom where they felt that their professional identity was under threat because they did not feel they had the relevant expertise. R1 said,

> I can't be an expert in every field, so if I'm lecturing in an area where I know I'm not an expert I go in and its the first thing I admit ... There are students who are going to feel hard done by that they haven't got what they expected to get. You are safe in same groups and maybe in some groups I'm not safe but I feel safer saying it. If I'm teaching something I'm not an expert in, *it isn't my fault.* (my emphasis)

R1's comments seem to link with Harvey and Katz's (1985, 205) notion of 'throwing away the mask'. Being open and honest means that you do not have to pretend to be something you are not. It is a way of integrating internal feelings with external behaviour. My thoughts on her strategy were that it seemed like a brave thing to do to, 'expose the nakedness of oneself not knowing'. (Clarkson 1994, 35), and interesting in the light of Woods' (1980, 23) assertion that 'strategy frequently implies deception'. There appears to be no deception but to suggest that a solution to imposter feelings is to be open with students is however, too simplistic. There are risks attached to exposing oneself in this way and as R1 said, 'you are safe in some groups and in other groups you are not safe'. It was much easier to be open with a group with whom she felt safe and R1 did say that there were some groups that she got very anxious about.

> I still get incredibly nervous about sessions with certain groups and its very hard to be open with them because quite honestly I think I might get my head chopped off. I feel that if I say I don't know, that this isn't my area they are going to say well what are you doing here then?

I discussed with my respondents what strategies they adopted with groups where they did not feel safe, where they felt that they did not have expert knowledge. R4 said,

> I would have to feel thoroughly prepared, I'd have to feel in control with groups that I feel unsure about, those groups where they see me as an expert and I don't see myself as that. I get worried I might make myself look stupid in front of them so I am more controlled with what I do. I might do group work but I would still direct it ...

R2 also spoke of her need to feel in control,

> I have to have a very tight framework, to be in control of things with those sessions that I've had to mug up you know because it isn't my area ... you feel sort of hollow and you do feel transparent. You hope that people are not going to catch you out because all you know is probably on the sheets of paper you've got clutched in your hand and if you go beyond that you've sort of had it really ... I might introduce group work but then you're thinking what on earth they might come up with and will I be able to answer their questions ... will I look silly in front of them.

The issue of dealing with student questions arose also with R9,

> You adopt strategies that try and stop people asking you questions like you go in with twenty or thirty OHTs and its one after the other ... and that's a way of managing ... it isn't really healthy for anybody at the end of the day.

With these women respondents I got the impression that there was a tremendous amount of soul searching, guilt and anxiety about the issue of their expertise or lack of it. R5 (male) however, was much more forthright in his comments,

> There's something to be said for defining the boundaries at the start, telling them your areas of expertise, then they can't stick expectations on you.

He appeared to be much more confident and our discussion about strategies provided an interesting contrast to those I had, had with my female respondents.

> I don't have a problem with saying I don't know, I tend to have the usual techniques of oh that's an interesting question and move back on to safer ground. If somebody does ask something I don't know about sometimes I'd just pretend I haven't heard, just leave it and move on ... I don't have too many anxieties about students asking me questions I can't respond to. I think I dance on my toes an awful lot and I think I like dancing on my toes. I'm a bit addicted to the adrenalin of going into the classroom and not being properly prepared and somebody says something and you have to reinterpret it which links with something you do know about.

Given that my sample is at this stage primarily female, I cannot draw any conclusions as to whether this constitutes a gender difference in terms of classroom practice, but is an issue which merits further investigation.

Discussion

From the data presented, it is evident that structural conditions have created private troubles for this group of adult educators; particularly when they are placed in situations where they feel they are teaching at or beyond the boundaries of their professional knowledge and expertise. The private troubles are most acute for those who have little autonomy to determine what and who they teach. Staffing reductions brought about by changes in funding arrangements and the need for colleges to compete for courses and students, has created a situation where this group of adult educators are having to be increasingly flexible. As one of my respondents remarked, '...you have to turn your hand to anything really' (R8). This situation is leading to demoralisation, stress, loss of professional identity and the need to devise strategies for survival in the classroom. It does also raise questions as to what implications this might have for student learning, particularly in the light of debates about quality in education.

Whilst I make no claims to the generalisability of the data presented, it is interesting to consider whether my respondents' experiences are unique or whether similar experiences can be found amongst adult educators in other institutions. Indeed, given the opening quotation to this paper regarding educational change as a global phenomena, one could ask whether the issues raised have international relevance. More research is required in order to explore this, but it would seem that even a cursory glance in the educational press would suggest that their stories have resonance elsewhere. If this is the case, it is imperative that those responsible for budgets find resources for staff development and support for staff in managing the changes they face. If the postmodern adult educator is to view who they are and what they do differently, then this must be seen as part of their professional learning. McCaffrey (1997) for example, has suggested that the role of university teachers should change from 'director of learning' to 'facilitator of learning'. I would argue that this issue is an example of what Hargreaves (1994, 10) calls the 'challenges of postmodernity' in his discussion of the future of teaching. This must be addressed to avoid the scenario discussed by Nias (1993, 139), who speaks of a 'grieving for a lost self' in her, discussion of the impact that change from one social or economic structure can have on teachers' sense of identity. She equates the disorientation experienced with a form of bereavement and suggests that,

> Unless teachers and other educationalists are given time to assimilate change and the stresses it brings, to accommodate purposefully to a new professional world and to re-establish a sense of control over it, bereavement may be followed not by the creation of new identities but by debilitating passivity, angry fear or in the end by the silence of complete disintegration.

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Boundary games: women and adult education

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Women at all times have participated in adult education through communities' activities, through support groups, family, religious communities, work, educational organisations or simply by themselves. For centuries, women have found their ways in getting the knowledge and the abilities they needed to adapt to their changing world. They have created their own institutions and their own groups in order to meet their needs. The women's movement is one of the most dynamic mass education movement. Alive throughout the world, it permeates knowledge, practices and policies in such a way that exclusion becomes inclusion and vice versa. Women's education has become one of the priorities both for competitiveness in industrialised countries and for sustainable development in developing ones. However, we know little about this participation because of the general omission and exclusion of women in history and in knowledge and because many learning activities conducted by adult women have been traditionally devalued and, hence, not accounted for.

The aim of this communication is to present an impressionist synthesis of women's inclusion and exclusion from and in adult education that lead me to develop an *identity map* in order to deal intellectually with women's diversity and world's complexity. This synthesis emerges from a wider research perspective on women and adult education that draws from the history of adult education mainly in Quebec, women's participation in adult education, today's international perspectives on women and education, feminist critiques of adult education, and educational practices in women's groups. This will enlighten how women have constructed their identities on boundary games.

Some elements of the history of adult education in Quebec

Women's omission and exclusion from history are more documented nowadays than it was ever before. Not only, women's history is being uncovered and revealed but courses on this topic are part of all women's studies programs. Even tools for inclusion exist (Schade 1994). Women's history in education has also been uncovered (Dumont 1990; Fahmy-Eid, Dumont 1983). It demonstrates how women's education was thought as training toward domesticity, an approach that founds echoes in adult education (Smith 1992; Westwood 1988). In Quebec, the feminist perspectives of the historian Michèle Jean, named president of 'La commission d'études sur la formation des adultes', made the 1982 report on adult education and training one which included women (CÉFA 1982). It denounced the lack of access to adult education for women, the lack of response to their needs and their marginalisation.

Since 1950, adult education in Quebec went through an institutionalisation. It started first from the worker's, co-operative or community movements. The institutionalisation was then taken over by the educational system, making adult education more scholarly oriented and eventually integrated within the youth system. Today, the business world is taking over with Law 90 that became effective in 1996. Companies are now obliged to invest one percent of their wage bill into educational activities (Solar, forthcoming).

Adult education history is marginal in the history of education and women within this history are also marginalised. This is even more so for women of colour and black women (Jumelle 1991). If domesticity was central at the turn of the century, institutionalisation oriented adult education toward schooling and professional training and development. Hence, production perspectives in official adult education came to replace reproduction perspectives, including ones to better exclude the others and, in so doing, placing women outside the educational realm (Martin 1982; O'Brien 1990).

A view on women's participation in adult education

Women have been active participants in adult education, in particular in institutional education as soon as it was accessible to them. As a young adult educator in university extension programmes, I came to realise that women were a majority. However, within the faculty where I worked, no activities responded to their specific needs. In fact, in 1973, all programmes but one or two were directed towards teachers. It was the time for school teachers upgrading as declared by governmental bylaws. It was the time, also, for developing a collective cultural identity around the 'Études québécoises', the only cultural programme to which belonged the unique women's course on women's history in Quebec.

In fact, programmes and contents were designed and organised as if women had no particular specificity, interests nor needs (Thompson 1983). Educational activities that attracted many women were usually devalued, classified as socio-cultural and eventually set aside official activities that gave credits leading to a diploma. I will never forget the simple dismissing comment of one of the faculty's officer when, together with some other colleagues, I proposed to create a new programme specific for women who wanted to return to school or to work. This man said: 'C'est un produit de luxe pour femmes de luxe' (It's a luxury programme for luxury women). This was at the turn of the 1980s.

From my practice with teachers professional development, I cannot forget the images of so many teachers, especially elementary school teachers, obliged to update their training and doing so with so much eagerness to develop their professional skills. Among them, I cannot forget those who, after attending the information meeting, came to me to excuse themselves for not being able to attend evening classes, their husband will not allow them to be outside the house at meals and child care times. Domesticity, in adult education, became implicit and had impact on women's participation.

I came to admire these women who added adult education attendance to the heavy load of their woman's life. Most of them prepared the meals for their family right after their day's work and just before rushing to their night classes. Most of them completed their studies despite the lack of time, the lack of support from their partner, their children and their family, and despite the very often paternalistic attitude of the male professors. I became sensitive to women's willingness to learn and to know. These women, originating mainly from the lower-class — as it was the case in the 1960s and 1970's — wanted to receive an education.

Eventually, the teachers' clientele diminished while the nursing one rose in numbers. Here again, women, in one of their main professional domain, had to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Similar patterns and conditions of continuing education exist between the teachers and the nurses. I came to question women's adult education as being compulsory for maintaining employability. For women, participating in formal adult education did not result in promotion, work reorientation nor real salary increase.

On similar grounds, work settings also offer boundary adult education to women. Companies usually organise more activities for professionals and managers than for employees, and the gender division of labour sets women on the lower scale of the hierarchy. Here, women remain at the edge of knowledge: the type of training given to them is practical and of immediate use. It is one of understanding. This is typically the case in technology training for workers, female and male. Adult education in the work market is geared only towards the job, offers limited perspectives and does not value women's skills such as empathy, dexterity, patience, capacity of doing repetitive work, technology skills.

Today's international perspectives on women and education

Taking an international perspective on women and education consolidates this impression of boundary games on production and reproduction. Women are both in and out. Neither well in, neither well out. The Delors Report (1996) is interesting in this perspective. First, it dichotomise the world in industrialised countries and developing ones. For the first ones, it supports feminist equality perspectives and insists on the necessity of attracting and retaining women in mathematics, science and technology without questioning the content, the use and the purpose of these fields of study, without really addressing issues of discrimination in the school system, be it on the grounds of gender, race, culture, or class.

Still in industrialised countries, women's recent success at school is devalued by the simple fact of omitting it and discussing exclusively male dropout. Female dropout is silenced even though the ratio is two to three. Double standard is at play here with the innate incompetence of female students being replaced by their innate schooling abilities. Both views are depriving women from their capacities. The debate, alive in Quebec, illustrates the relation between power and knowledge (Giroux 1992). Further, one may wonder about the implicit fear of a state governed by a female intelligentsia.

Finally, adult education in industrialised countries is viewed as a tool to maintain competitiveness and to help adults adapt to the changing realities. Adult education is expressed in terms of professional development or market reorientation. People are viewed as workers and economy is the guideline. People, as citizens, as individuals, as partners in a family and in the community have no place (Solar 1995).

Economy is also the foundation for adult education in developing countries. Here, all international reports (Unesco 1995; Delors 1996), starting with the Jomtien conference, prioritise women's and girls' education. For women, literacy is going to upgrade their position in society in particular by monitoring birth rate, by improving their health and the one of their family, by giving them tools to be active members of the economy. Although, education does improve women's life, the literacy perspective is neither feminist nor critical. Literacy, unless made emancipatory, bounds women mainly into the reproduction sphere and little on the production. It does not generally respond to women's need nor address women's specific conditions — polygamy, sexual mutilation, land access (Chlebowska 1990). Women's basic rights for a democratic participation are not even met.

Feminist critiques of adult education

Some feminist critiques of education have already been presented in the above discussion. Let us add that institutional adult education does not generally take into account women's perspectives, women's diversity and women's needs. It is almost exclusively oriented towards job and professional development. For women, this represents a complete turnover from the education prescribed to them from the beginning of the century till the 1960s and the 1970s. The production sphere takes over the reproduction sphere. Nowadays, almost nothing is left of this general tendency to view women's education in terms of domesticity. Domesticity is now outside schools and institutions. In so doing, it is retrieved for the science hierarchy and some women's concerns or educational needs are reset at the margin. On a more theoretical level, tools for building feminist critiques of adult education have been set forward by various scholars such as Belenky *et al.* (1986), Chaponnière (1992), Gaskell and McLaren (1987), Gilligan (1982), Goulet and Kurztman (1986), Spelman (1988), to name but a few. However, I still have the feeling that feminist critiques remain to be completed. Most of the feminist critiques, be they more liberal or more critical, addressing sexism, racism or both, pertain to the field of education at large or are imbedded in feminist pedagogy and critical pedagogy (Chervin 1997; hooks 1994; Solar 1992; Weiler 1988). Moreover, most of the production seems to emerge from the fields of Women's Studies and Black Studies, black feminist perspectives having succeeded to question the exclusion of mainstream feminist thought. In other words, feminist critique of adult education as a field of study is still under construction.

Educational practices in women's groups.

From the above discussion, it follows that what is of direct concern to women is mainly addressed within women's groups. That is, subjects which are on the boundary of institutional adult education, outside the production or reproduction spheres, have a good chance to be dealt with in women's groups. Violence against women is an exemplary illustration. In Quebec, women created the first shelters in the 1970s. After several years of practice, most of them joined their efforts in a network. The 'Regroupement des maisons d'hébergement et de transition pour femmes victimes de violence' became powerful. It made violence against women a public issue and contributed to the governmental policy development and implementation. This group produced new understanding and disseminated knowledge about violence. Books and research were conducted. I worked with them for six years in developing training programmes and training tools for the shelters' workers. This experience at the boundaries of knowledge, women's teaching, and training trainers has been an everyday challenge (Solar 1991a). It made me realise how an essential issue for women is set as unimportant by mainstream institutions. At that time, I was directing a women's programme for women and men working with women. The need for a course on violence was crucial for the development of the programme. Different social actors wanted to develop an understanding of this reality and were in needs of intervention tools. Here also, I cannot forget the answer given to me by a faculty's officer when I presented a course content on the subject. It went along this line: 'There is not even enough content for a three hour lecture.' This was in 1988. Since then, the content and the tools developed within this women's group have been institutionalised in the health services and the social work system. The theme of violence has been extended to other social groups. Social schools, and the faculty in which I used to work, offer now a one year programme or courses on violence.

Violence is only one example. Similar analysis can be made with innovative insight emerging from women's life. This was or is the case with contraception, abortion, legal autonomy of the married women, of the immigrant women, with poverty, child care, social economy, generic competencies of housewives, and more recently with social economy. The women's movement is a popular mass education. It is a very important aspect of adult education that the field calls informal education, non-formal education, or popular education. These words set it in the realm of the blur.

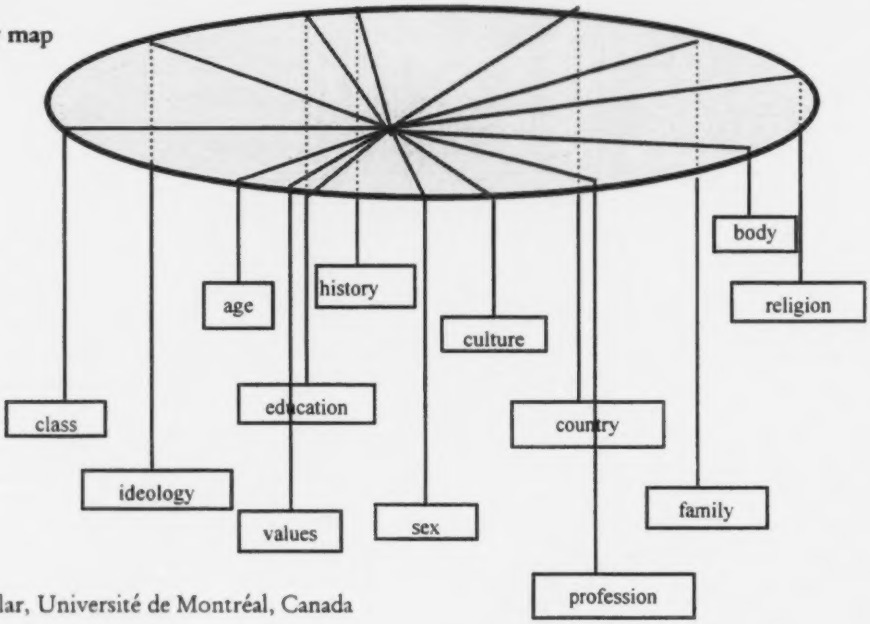
Put differently, women's practices and knowledge production are not included in mainstream adult education. The field will gain insight by being more inclusive and the women's movement is one of the strategies women gave themselves for collective discovery.

An identity map

Boundary games make identity multiple. Black feminism has dismantled white feminism's assertion of womanhood based uniquely on gender. Blackness has made whiteness as visible as gender has made power relations between women and men visible. Other social groups have made other forms of discrimination visible. These new evidences sustain the postmodern approach to multiple identity (Giroux 1991). Decentralising identity makes identity building problematic (Collard 1990) and puts aside any theorising relying on a hierarchy of characteristics or on a unique goal.

This new understanding of a contextualised identity made me revised my representation of the world in which men and women provided an almost exclusive categorisation of people. I had to discard this Boolean approach that plays on dichotomies to place people in a set or another. I finally used element of graph theory to develop the following identity map. This identity map represents a decentred identity in the sense that there is not a single locus. The identity is rather represented as a round platform on which the locus of identity can move. The locus of identity, at a given time and place, is the actualised weighted identity of a person. That is to say that the locus of identity is pulled in one direction or another. It moves on the map and stops at some point as a result of the different weights at work at that particular moment in life. For example, my immigrant identity may never be weighting on my usual locus of identity unless I find myself in the middle of a debate about the lack of immigrants' nationalism. Similarly, my whiteness will be at play in a black women's group.

The identity map



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This map of identity (Solar 1991b) allows a comprehension of a human being in its diversity given a specific context. It illustrates the strengths at work at particular times. It provides only an illustration of one person at the time. However, the identity map gives also an understanding of possible similarities between individuals and explains solidarity in action. For example, feminist groups are diverse and their goals are often different. However, they might join together in fighting against a specific issue, say poverty. 'La marche contre la pauvreté', orchestrated by the Fédération des femmes du Québec in 1995, illustrates this possible coalition of groups and individuals. Hundreds of women walked from Montreal to Quebec in order to oblige the government to address women's poverty, in particular by raising the minimum wage. The march ended up with more than 10,000 women and men in front of the parliament. The scope was pursued the year after with women surrounding the parliament, hand in hand for 24 hours. A similar event is being organised around the world for the year 2000. By now, 32 countries are participating. Here, the collective identity of women builds on a similar locus of identity of women across the world. Solidarity bounds when identities link.

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Women's participation in tertiary education: misogynistic responses

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In another paper (Stalker in press) I provided a framework for understanding and conceptualising from a feminist's perspective barriers to women's participation The purpose of this paper is to explore that theorisation through the empirical study of women's experiences of men's responses to their participation in a particular site of adult education, the tertiary institution. In order to provide a base for this paper, I first present a brief summary of my critique of the traditional conceptualisation of barriers to participation. I then explore the demands and limitations on women embedded in misogynistic contexts. The methodology and selected findings are followed by a brief discussion of the findings and their relevance to our understandings of barriers to women's participation in adult education activities.

Barriers to participation

Studies into participation, non-participation and barriers to learners' participation have formed cornerstones of the field's research for decades. Much of the current research on barriers tends to be guided by the classic work of Patricia Cross (1981). Her model presents three types of barriers as explanatory categories for non-participation:

> Situational barriers are those arising from one's situation in life at a given time ... Institutional barriers consist of all those practices and procedures that exclude or discourage working adults from participating in education activities ... Dispositional barriers are those related to attitudes and self-perceptions about oneself as a learner. (Cross 1981, 98).

Cross's model is problematic in three ways which relate to the gender concerns of this paper. First, the model is presented as gender neutral and thus by definition is androcentric (Stalker 1996). Second, a closer look at the model reveals that her situational and dispositional barriers fundamentally 'blame the victim' (Ryan 1972). These two categories implicitly assume that potential learners are responsible for their non-participation and that the non-participant is somehow inferior to the participant, with less desire or motivation to overcome barriers. The third problem with this classic model lies in its tendency to give little consideration to the impact of macro-level factors. Cross does not make clear connections to the macro-level social, economic, political, and cultural contexts which form barriers to participation. These criticisms remain if the literature of a particular site of adult education, the tertiary intuition, is examined.

There is much to be gained by basing an exploration of micro-level individual and institutional factors in macro level concepts. After all, those concepts are experienced on a day-to-day basis in ways which foster or inhibit participation in adult education. In terms of barriers to women's participation, important macro-level barriers are patriarchy, androcentricity, sexism or sex discrimination. From these macro-level barriers flow the lived experiences which form the barrier which is never named yet which strongly influences the participation of women: misogyny.

Misogyny

Misogyny is fundamentally about hostility to women. It is expressed in acts which can be placed on a continuum which ranges from suspicion, displeasure and discontent with women to abuse, brutality and violence against them. Misogyny occurs within the context of relationships between and among individuals, can be practised by women against women and is shaped by particular social, economic, historical and cultural contexts.

Fundamentally, misogynists view women in terms of either how they desire us to be or how they fear us to be. In this paper, I label the former view reification and the latter vilification. Together, these two views create and are sustained by subjugation. In this paper I present these three elements in a stark manner to reclaim the vile nature of misogyny in its classic sense and to throw into sharp relief issues relevant to women's participation in adult education activities. There is of course, a much more unstable discourse about what women are or should be than this falsely tidy triadic representation presents. It can be argued that these views differ according to one's ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, or ability. However, the three elements presented below shape the *dominant* discourse of misogyny in Westernised, industrialised nations. Thus, a counter-argument can be made that for women in these groups, they create, not a different, but a 'double dilemma' (Torton Beck 1991, 19).

Reification

Misogynists present the characteristics of 'Woman' not as an entity of social construction, but rather as one of biological destiny. Woman is fixed as a particular kind of woman: 'naturally' sensitive, nurturing and caring as well as industrious, thrifty and quiet. Embedded in these 'virtues' is women's location of 'lovely inferiority' in which our primary role is to 'adorn their male relatives' (Steele cited in Rogers 1966, 274). There is a vision of a 'feminine' woman who is subordinate in the minds of men and women alike (Baron McBride 1976; Graham 1994). This weaker and subordinate position of women locates us as helpmates who have submissive roles as mistress, partner and mother. These roles ensure that we take care of the domestic needs of the household and that the home is a sanctuary of reasonableness and stability in the midst of an irrational and chaotic external world. We become the primary keepers of morality, tidiness, cleanliness and order. Simultaneously, we willingly provide domestic, emotional, reproductive and sexual services.

Vilification

The second dimension of misogynistic responses represents how men fear us to be. It has two interrelated dimensions: we may be denounced for our weaknesses or we may be scorned for our strengths.

In our weaknesses, women are portrayed as idle, inactive and of insubstantial spirit. We supposedly suffer from lack of self respect and are vain, prideful, jealous and haughty. Fundamentally weak of spirit, woman is an indolent, 'changeable, fickle and treacherous moon relative to the male constant, proud and dependable sun' (Rigolot 1994, 225). This weak and undependable woman is an ungrateful, greedy person who is basically self-serving, extravagant and eager to spend her partner's hard earned money. This view of women's paucity of spiritual and moral integrity meshes nicely with the vilification of women's strengths. Portrayed as weak in morals and less capable of control, women are linked to unrestrained sexuality, sin, temptation and ruin. Throughout history, women have been said to be, in varying degrees,

> a hindrance to the thinking man. We are proud, irascible, adulterous, materialistic. We are governed by animal passions, are given to abandoning our children, and aspire to rule and thereby usurp powers which by right should be exclusively male. (Kahn Blumstein 1977, 24).

Like Amazons and witches, we can be identified as too militant, too strong and too possessive of a 'ruinous power which [they] can exercise over men' (Rogers 1966, 13).

Subjugation

Subjugation is an outcome of reification and vilification and also the process which maintains them. At one level it operates under the guise of protection. At a second level, it is about suppression of women's unruliness.

The vision created by reification of the delicate woman with her lovely inferiority lends itself nicely to the view that women need to be protected. Softly veiled in the notion of love, misogyny survives under the guise of 'courtly romance' (Kahn Blumstein 1977, 1). The woman is reduced to an emotional and intellectual non-person (Kahn Blumstein 1977, 311) who must be provided with security and safety. These heroics reinforce women's role as the keepers of homes which are sanctuaries. In seeming harmony with this role, men are linked to presumably honourable notions of protection, defence and guardianship. Embedded within these terms, however, are repressive concepts of supervision, possession, custody and ownership.

Subjugation is also expressed through the suppression of women. In this instance, suppression is a reaction to the view of women as unruly and as a threat to men's greater power, authority and control. Since women are seen as potentially dangerous and in need of control, the task becomes to constrain them. An obvious constraint of women is made through violence against women. It is effective because it generates a deep fear that constrains women from breaking away from the norms, values, beliefs and behaviours which are deemed to be appropriate for a woman. It is based in force and discipline and presumes women's submission.

A more subtle form of subjugation appears as a more social and acceptable exercise of power (Hawkesworth 1990). It can be expressed as satires and jokes which make no distinction between the admittedly obnoxious behaviours of a type of woman and a particular woman. In the same vein, satires against women's failings, or statements of our mental and moral differences from men become the basis of ostensibly harmless jokes. Together, satire and jokes are a canny way to limit, demean and stifle women's power.

In this section, I have examined the nature of misogyny as the day to day lived experience of macro-level factors related to gender. I have based my analysis in a stark interpretation of those factors and for the most part I have not explored the active agency of women. Although I have struggled to retain the idea of misogyny as a gender neutral practice, much of the literature has forced me into presenting it as a male practice. Space restrictions prevent me from exploring the dynamic interplay, and the shifting boundaries among the three elements of reification, vilification and subjugation. Similarly, the complexities, variations, heterogeneity and differences inherent in the concept can not be assessed.

Research design and methodology

Data were collected over a period of four months from a total of thirteen women. All volunteered during the final semester of their first year of study and were interviewed during their second year of study at a New Zealand tertiary institution. All the women were enrolled in a Bachelor of Education or in a Bachelor of Social Sciences with an Education major. The women's ages ranged from 29-52, all but one had children and included European and Maori, heterosexual and gay women.

The data related in this study were collected via semi-structured interviews of usually an hour's duration. The questions relevant to this paper probed women's experiences of the responses made by men with whom they had primary relationships as they attempted to return to tertiary education and during their attendance at university. This focus is congruent with literature that suggests women's relationships with men are primary and formative.

The research design was guided by an interpretive approach called phenomenography (Marton 1981). Final categorisations were stable representations of core meanings captured in the interviews.

Selected findings

Men's expectations for keeping the home a sanctuary

Make learning invisible

Women kept the home a sanctuary undisturbed by their busy and demanding lives as learners by making their learning hidden. As one woman said: 'I tried to make sure that the household ran just exactly smooth and the puddings were as good as always and that nothing was ever out of place — everything was just so ... I would be studying pretending I was watching TV. So it was invisible. I tried to make it really invisible'. For some women, this task was made easier, because they previously had been 'up at the [children's's] school quite a lot anyway with lunches and mother help and all that stuff anyway and I don't even think he realised'.

This effort to ensure that participation was 'fitted in without upsetting the routines of the house' and that it was not 'to interfere with the family' often meant that courses and course work were scheduled strictly between nine in the morning and three or four in the afternoon (before the partner was due home for 'tea' or the children had to be picked up from school) and not on weekends. For similar reasons, the women sometimes enrolled in just one course. Alternately, they could became 'a bit devious, I suppose. I said I'd do two subjects in the first semester and I actually enrolled in the four and paid my fees half by half'. The invisibility of women's learning could be overly successful, it seemed. As one woman said: 'Doesn't matter how many times I say 'Well I haven't been home long', I was supposed to, I think maybe have got up early, and dinner ready in the morning, I don't know, some imaginary time ...

Maintain domestic harmony

Congruent with women's attempts to keep the home a sanctuary was their concern to maintain harmony within that domestic world. This meant, first, providing home comforts. The ideal as expressed by one husband was 'on a winter's afternoon, if he walks in the door after dinner and the fire is going and the children are either doing their music or doing their homework matching television. He can smell the roast dinner as he walks in'. Domestic harmony was fundamentally based on 'very much of the old school of a woman should be in the home looking after the children, cooking, and cleaning and being there for everything and that's it'. Thus, it became an issue of 'Well this it the woman's place, (she) should be doing these'...you know sort of a list of all the things I should do'. Similarly, women could claim 'I do get comments about whether the dusting is done or whether the floor is swept. And they're things that have never come up before'. This demand 'to look after the children all day on the Saturday, provide this stunning meal, then turn around and be an entertaining hostess and charming and look good then clean it all up and then fall into bed at one o'clock', stretched the women's boundaries. After all, 'There's a limit to everyone's ability!'

The second aspect of maintaining domestic harmony concerned the women's availability. One partner complained that 'since you started up at university — he used to ring me up during the day — I'd always know where you were. I never know where you are now, what you're doing ... I think he felt it was, first of all I was pinching, he thought, some of his time'. It seemed important, to 'just stop, sit down, read a book, watch TV, or do my tapestry or just do nothing' in the presence of male partners. It was not always enough to merely 'have time for him' however. Being 'off in another world' and not being there 'in terms of being chatty to him' elicited negative responses.

Men's role of protection

Partners' protection of the women learners appeared as directives with overtones of care. Sometimes partners discouraged the women's participation and expressed concerns that 'its going to be too time consuming. You're already doing a ten hour day, you can't possibly do all the extras as well ... look at all the extra work load'. Along these same lines, women 'get the moaning 'oh you know you shouldn't be going to be (stay up) late' and yet he set up that situation where it forced me, where I had to do it like that, you know'. Alternatively, some partners made the decision for the women learners to return to study. This had its advantages, as 'if it came from me he probably wouldn't do it (support her participation)'. Sometimes, men made the decision that the woman was not achieving her potential and insisted that she quit paid work to get better grades. There was a sense too, that 'if you had failed, you would have got the big cuddle: 'Never mind, there there, you've tried that', but that if you succeeded, that it had presented a 'challenge' and the protective cuddle was not forthcoming. As one woman succinctly put it 'Probably to sum it up in a nutshell, the more educated I became and the more successful I was academically, the more he withdrew. The less support I got'.

From a different perspective, women's involvement in education was seen as a release for the men from the 'demands' associated with taking care of women. A partner could feel that 'it was good for me to go and do something that filled in those hours and made me happy because then there wasn't any demand from me to him ... (my involvement with study) released him from any responsibility of having to fulfil any need for me'.

Men's role of constraint

Clear messages were made by men that 'you will have more trouble the more she gets educated' and that fundamentally, 'women should be behind the sink' type of thing'. Restrictions on the women seemed related to their growth in strength. As one woman said: 'I think the behaviours have always been there, but I think the thing sort of, like, seemed to build up more and more and more and the stronger I got, the more intense his anti became'. It was a matter of when a woman 'stated my part...that's what he's not liking either'. For some women this meant that they made an effort 'where I would have to show that I'm not, sort of, clever, because he's supposed to be (make), in his way, everything run okay'. Similarly, they could recognise that 'before I probably didn't say anything that would make waves too much, whereas, now I will say something and — umm — but I try not to go too far'.

A special issue: cost

Although the literature often notes 'cost' as a barrier to women's participation, this study uncovered subtleties underlying that item. There was an argument made by women that the cost of the courses could be offset by 'two reasonable incomes' as they faced older age and retirement. The expenditure thus was promoted as 'an investment in our future'. The converse arguments were also made however. The possibility of earning wages immediately, rather than in the future put pressure on women to 'be back accumulating some cash for our old age'. Similarly, in times of under and unemployment, cost concerns were related primarily to the risk of leaving a 'secure job' and a 'solid pay cheque' rather than to the actual cost of the programme.

Discussion and conclusion

These selected findings focus on the women's experiences of men's negative responses to their participation in tertiary education. Findings not presented here reveal as well that women experienced positive responses from men and equally negative ones from women. It is fair to say, however that in this portion of the study that women could easily identify negative responses to their participation. Those responses, analysed from a framework of misognyny give new insights into barriers traditionally categorised as 'too tired', 'family responsibilities', 'lack of family support'.

This new theorisation guides new solutions. It suggests that we move beyond treating barriers to women's participation as a micro-level dilemma, that is, as an issue of relationships between and among individuals or as an issue of access and opportunities. Rather, we must move to dealing with these barriers as macro-level social, economic, political, and cultural factors supported by the state, church and media. For example, the new interpretations on the meanings of 'cost' in these women's stories are congruent with a harsher socio-economic context in which women's location has remained basically unchanged. Our solutions thus become, at a minimum, related to supporting the struggles for equal pay for work of equal value and for economic recognition of work done in the home.

In conclusion, it is only through a further examination of these kinds of macro-level barriers in relation to women's day to day experiences of misogyny that barriers can be deeply understood. Such a reformulation would commit adult educators to the eradication of patriarchy, androcentricity, sexism and sex discrimination. If adult educators seriously wish to foster women's participation, we must address these fundamental oppressions which are the real and lived barriers which women experience daily.

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Uncovering the Blackfeet knowing

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Tribal members are urged by the elders to investigate means to ensure the tribe's survival since the journey of the tribe will rest upon the shoulders and dreams of its children, and those adults who choose to share with them, and all the people, the powers gifted to the tribe eons ago.

For many generations, tribal people relied on the traditional United States educational system to support their future as tribes of North America indigenous people. This historical dependency can be traced from colonial times to today, illustrating hundred of years of assimilation process.

The Blackfeet are the children of people put on earth by Apistotokiwa, the Maker. The Nizitapi, or Real People as they call each other, originated on a homeland covering today's southern Alberta and western Saskatchewan, Canada, and central Montana in the United States.

Current educational philosophy applied to Indian children is in need of change in order to benefit from recommendations derived from historical analysis of the reservation school systems' education achievement record. The educational record clearly illustrates the long standing negative consequences of traditional American educational formats on Indian children (Rowland, 1994).

In spite of the legislative effort giving tribal communities more control over their education process change has been slow and weak. For example, the long standing practice of eliminating tribal languages from the education process continues to devastate and negate indigenous attempts to educate tribal people. Too often Indian education formats merely replicate the traditional American public school model. What is called for is further revision and definition of the educational model needed to educate Indian children successfully.

The Blackfeet were no exception to the arrangement of educational services through government contracts with public and parochial movements. Many theories heavily influenced by biased sociological considerations were used to establish educational formats considered practically barbaric in this day and age. For example, the practice of removing Indian children from their homes and sending them to far away boarding schools has ceased. Today, due to the lack of objective history and reflection on what took place in the past, a majority of reservation residents--including the educational cadre--know little about the dynamics of education applied to Blackfeet people.

The speaking of the native language by Indian students has never been socially and educationally accepted by educators and their theories. Instead of true investigation of the role of language in learning, educators have simply assumed it is a negative factor. Once established, bias becomes fact. History shows the Blackfeet were no exception to the widespread bias.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of selected Blackfeet elders (a) concerning what constitutes the traditional Blackfeet knowledge base and (b) concerning how they believe knowledge should be passed on through various formal and informal institutions that exist in the Blackfeet community. The goal of the research was to uncover challenging designs for transmitting tribal culture for future generations by incorporating the Blackfeet language learning formats with children and families.

According to the Rowland Study (1994), the viewpoint of the tribal elders is the link to the tribal way-of-knowing. Educational institutions and learning environments have neglected to teach Indian cultural elements, belief systems and traditions, nor have the views of the elders have been incorporated into these systems. Rowland made the assumption that education provides a vital role in transmitting culture for future generations. One more assumption is vital to this study and that is that tribal knowledge is transmitted through the language of the tribe. This concept holds true with the Blackfeet Tribe. Education is the means for all learning to take place. This process must be started early with young children and their families, prior to the direct influence of the formal education. By means of in-depth, personal interviews, the following research questions were addressed: 1) What are the Blackfeet concepts of wisdom and knowledge? 2) What are the characteristics of Blackfeet teachers and students? 3) How does a person learn the Blackfeet culture? 4) How does a person learn in the Blackfeet culture? 5) How are the Blackfeet ways passed on in the culture? 6) How important is the language in transmitting Blackfeet knowledge? 7) What role should various community institutions be playing in passing on the Blackfeet Knowing?

The Blackfeet elders

The elders are the older people, who still retain the Blackfeet language, maintain the traditional way of viewing life, and have experiences to share. The major focus of each interview was to share the Blackfeet Way, native language concerns, and the importance of using the language. Education seemed equally important because it was through the education process that the language was greatly affected. There was some hesitation on the part of the elders in sharing the deepest knowledge of the tribe, in an interview format due to the time limits. There was high regard among the elders for the language to continue and their eyes brightened when the elders spoke of the young children learning and speaking the Blackfeet language.

The concepts of Blackfeet Knowing were shared to a large degree by the elders. The elders spoke in ways that what they were sharing were their deepest concerns. Their opportunity to share this information gave hope since they are the last generation of true holders of the Blackfeet knowledge or the way of knowing. The elders talked about the importance of spirituality and everything that goes with it. The true meaning of the word needs to be supported by strictness. Some felt it was important to point out the analogy that the spirituality of the Blackfeet way can also be practised through the Christian way. It is through the prayers that made a difference in many situations of life experiences. They talked of the importance of education. Education was viewed highly.

Blackfeet knowing

The elders of the community wanted to share their thoughts and knowledge with hopes of getting a message across to the community. The interviews were done in the Blackfeet language and translated back to English to give the elders every opportunity to feel comfortable in responding to a semi-structured interview process. A team approach to conducting the interview was used. The team included the researcher, a recorder to run the video camera, and the translator who was a speaker of the language. The researcher presented questions in English, and the translator repeated the questions in the Blackfoot language. The team approach worked well in this setting because the interviews were conducted in the Blackfoot language only.

Data collecting grouped into categories of Blackfeet life, family relationships, names, ceremonies, language, education, and transferring of knowledge. The perceptions of the elders as described through the Blackfoot language revealed overwhelming, comprehensive, and rich reflections on families, schooling, and community.

Blackfeet life

The elders reflected on their experiences, mostly when they were young and with their parents. The elders shared the socialising of long visits, singing, and dancing. The Blackfoot language was the bond because everyone spoke only the language. Elders today probably faced and experienced the most change of any generation of people. The fast pace of living has caught up to the Blackfeet as a group of people in areas where language loss is very evident. The elders are worried about it. The spirituality in the families used to be strong. To be able to reflect back in time provides comfort to many elders because they have carried forward their knowledge and want the next generation to take over. Storytelling among the people was a favourite form of visiting each other.

Family relationships

The elders valued the extended family concepts of living. Their discussion reflects that the relatives took care of them as children. Constant praying for the well being of family members was done daily. Again, the Blackfoot language was held in high regard by the elders. They were proud of the family members that know and speak the Blackfoot language.

Names

Blackfeet names given to family members were carefully chosen. These names had significant meaning and power to an individual throughout their lifetime. Many of the elders shared how their names were obtained. Their families have also all been named. People's names guide them through their journey in life. It is very important that every individual have in their possession a Blackfeet name.

Ceremonies

The elders hold knowledge sacred. This knowledge can only be obtained through the Blackfoot language. Ceremonial rites and rituals have been handed down by Creator Sun since the beginning of time and must continue to remain so. The elders only shared what they felt was appropriate and stressed the writing of information is not considered revealing of or disturbing to the sacredness. The time is coming when many ceremonial rites need to be transferred to new and younger people. Therefore, the urgency for reviving the teachings through the Blackfoot language is of utmost concern. Ceremonies must continue to provide protection for the people.

Language

The elders have high regards for the Blackfoot language. The elders feel the language must be taught to the children. The children are going to bring back what was lost in language retention. Even though punishment was used to get rid of the language in the elders and generations before them, it made everyone place a higher value on the language. The elders are willing and anxious to take on apprentices of the language. Failure to retain the language has weakened and is threatening the Blackfeet knowledge base. One elder felt strongly that when mothers quit breastfeeding their babies, the language started eroding away.

Education

The elders reflected on their educational experience in the formal school setting. Those times were not totally enjoyable for many of the elders while others knew that education was a means of survival. All formal education systems had one goal in mind when teaching Blackfeet children; that goal was to produce English speakers at any expense. The devaluing of the Blackfeet way of life by education affected many generations of people. The educational systems also dismantled the strong family structures of the Blackfeet people. The elders feel the people must have their ceremonies to provide support, their language to transmit culture, and the singing and dancing to promote to restore the Blackfeet lifestyles.

Transfer of knowledge

The relationship between children and families is very strong. The elders have come to a realisation that the language needs to be restored again. It is through the children where hope lies. Some elders have advocated teaching children at infancy levels and breastfeeding will provide the nurturing and support all children need. The path must be paved for transferring tribal knowledge, which means more language speakers are needed. One elder advocated for a reflection and action process of seeking tribal knowledge by using tribal people to conduct field-base research.

Conclusion

The elders of the tribe shared and reflected on the past, their experiences, their education, significance of knowing the language and how to transfer knowledge. From this data, the following conclusions were drawn: 1) Formal education has failed to include Blackfeet learning and teaching in its methodology. 2) Indian education has not served as a tool for restoring Blackfeet knowledge. 3) Blackfeet knowledge must come from and through the language as an accepted methodology. 4) Education can transmit Blackfeet knowledge only if the language is valued and respected. 5) The family role of transmitting tribal knowledge has been severely weakened. 6) The immersion school concept is an excellent approach for learning a language. 7) The role of the elder in relationship to Blackfeet knowledge has not been accepted or adequately utilised.

The goal of this research was to present challenging designs for transmitting tribal knowledge for future generations by incorporating the Blackfeet language learning formats with children and families. Examining the elders' perceptions was not rewarding in trying to move forward with action. Therefore, three approaches were identified as areas to strengthen through educational efforts: 1) Formal Education System. Public schools, boarding schools, and parochial schools have all failed to value the Blackfeet student's language, culture, and traditions as important to learning. The denial to accept diversity in teaching is evident. 2) Community-based programs. There are three existing community-based education program that have already implemented Blackfeet language (Piegan Institute, Blackfeet Tribe Head Start Program and Blackfeet Community College) learning strategies in the community. These should serve as a model to others who wish to implement a native language program. 3) Family Structures and Roles. The Blackfeet unit that exists as the extended family structure must be included in learning. In the past education of Blackfeet children, it was evident the family units has been severely weakened.

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Learning for labour: women exploring boundaries

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In this paper we reflect on the learning processes of women when orienting themselves towards the labour market. We recently finished the preparatory stage of a qualitative research concerning factors stimulating and inhibiting the participation of lowly skilled unemployed women to training programmes and to the labour market. An important outcome of this rather atheoretical but fascinating research is the contradictory position of a paid job in women's lives: Learning for labour is an important step to take without necessarily guaranteeing an appropriate and good job. This observation gave rise to some interesting questions: How can the learning of women be understood in the light of this paradox? How can the network of accompanying institutions adequately account for these learning processes? Thanks to a PhD project, we have the opportunity of devoting further research to extend and to substantiate these themes theoretically. In this paper we thus suggest some insights to interpret the raised questions. First, we briefly clarify the contradictory tendencies against which these questions are situated. Secondly, we investigate the relevance of Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation to understand the learning processes of the women involved (Mezirow 1978, 1985, 1990). After having criticised these concepts, we explore some of Alheit's ideas on biographical and transitional learning which especially inspire us (Alheit 1992, 1995a, 1995b).

The paradox of labour

Many authors from different spheres (Beck 1986, Giddens 1991, Jansen and Van der Veen 1992, Finger 1995, Meijers 1995) have described the fundamental changes to which modern society is subject. Globally two important processes of change are discerned: *economic developments* which result in the transition of an industrial to a postindustrial society and *socio-cultural transformations* which are most often labelled as individualisation processes. The mutual reinforcement and interdependency of these evolutions is manifest in the changing position of labour in the changing human life-course. While more people orient their life towards the labour market, the reality of a paid job has become questionable.

In industrial society the *standard biography* is built around *employment*. It consists of a succession of stages referring to the age one has attained. Children and adolescents go to school to prepare themselves for adult life. When entering adulthood they search for a job as men, whereas most women postpone or interrupt their careers to take care of their family. The career biography is completed by a period of rest. For ever more people this trajectory became possible and desirable. However, against the shift from a modern to a post or radically modern society, the institutionalised life-course as a social construct of modernity becomes problematic (Giddens 1991, 1994). For several reasons, economic as well as socio-cultural, *work as main achievement of human life loses significance.*

The modern dream of full employment for everybody is neither a realistic nor a satisfying option (Cantillon 1995). It seems unreal because of the limited labour supply due to fast developments on the labour market, such as continuous flexibilisation and automatisation and the growing of the service sector at the cost of the industrial sector (Paolucci 1996). Nevertheless more people attempt to enter the labour market, some as the consequence of emancipation processes, others on the contrary forced to secure individually their survival or their standard of living. It is not a satisfying option because next to a paid job people also validate other important and meaningful activities which structure their life. The life period people actually engage themselves in labour is shortening as the prolonged youth stage and the accelerated retirement make clear. (Elchardus 1996, Alheit 1992, 1995a). Moreover, for the limited number of jobs still available ever higher qualifications and flexibility are demanded. To come up to these requirements people are pushed to continuously acquire new skills and knowledge. Consequently several educational transitions become necessary, but the link to a concordant job is missing (Meijers 1995).

Against this backdrop, we reflect in this paper on how the learning for labour of women can be understood while on the one hand a paid job seems to be indispensable for their self-fulfilment or income acquisition and on the other hand jobs which both satisfy these needs and can be combined with other activities, are hard to be found.

Can learning for labour be considered transformative?

When looking for a theoretical understanding of these questions, the insights of Mezirow (1978, 1985, 1990) cannot be overlooked for he was one of the first explicitly interested in the way adults learn in various settings rather than exclusively focusing on educational settings. Therefore he can be considered as the founder of a tradition of adult learning theories which in the meantime have further developed. Moreover Mezirow (1978) did some similar research on women taking part in re-entry programmes in order to return to college or to work. This research was the empirical ground for his *theory of perspective transformation* which he claims to apply to adult learning in general. Mezirow states that adults learn by acquiring progressively 'more inclusive, discriminating, permeable and integrative perspectives' (Mezirow 1990, 14) to give meaning to their experiences. According to him, this process of transformative learning through critical reflection is the most important adult learning domain. Mezirow's concepts served as a model for theorising on adult learning but do nowadays also invite critical debates. On the basis of our interview data we briefly go further into these matters.

A major critique lies in the fact that Mezirow does not fully account for the tension between the individual on the one hand and the socio-cultural on the other. By locating perspective transformation entirely within the individual, he fails to explore the constitutive relationships between individuals and the socio-cultural, political and historical contexts in which they and their learning are situated (Clark and Wilson 1991). The *one-sided emphasis on the individual and the lack of interest for the context* is problematic on a theoretical and global level, as well as on the level of the individual biography and of the learning context. We elaborate successively some aspects of these interrelated levels.

Mezirow's theory strongly refers to traditional interpretations of emancipation, critical reflection and rationality which all foster perspective transformation. He fails to recognise however, that these theoretical concepts are themselves *situated products of modernity* and therefore limited in their application. By not questioning his own starting points he does neither account for the original context in which these premises came to existence nor for the fast developments modern society has undergone.

With respect to our theme of women and labour, Mezirow is probably right when he would state that participation to the labour market necessitates a transformation of meaning perspectives for women. Women have to reflect on internalised traditional gender roles and taking a job can be a part of an emancipatory process in which they become more self-confident and independent. But what is the value of the newly acquired perspective when women cannot find a job after a vocational training course or when the nature of the work they come to perform does not support their new identity?

Regarding the biographical level, Mezirow argues that in adult life people are confronted with specific challenges and choices. Unexpected incidents or the succession of mutually reinforcing events can question present-day meaning perspectives and require adjusted world-views to integrate them. In Mezirow's words 'we tend to move through adulthood along a maturity gradient that involves a sequential restructuring of one's frame of reference for making and understanding meanings' (Mezirow 1978, 104). This statement indicates that Mezirow inclines to hold on to a *normative conception of the life-course*. He does not acknowledge that his understanding of maturity and self development over the life-course is itself a modern social construction (Tennant 1993). We mention two connected problems. First, the concept of a general process of adult development can be seriously challenged as has been done amongst others by feminist researchers, when demonstrating that women follow 'different' developmental patterns than men. The emphasis on self development in adult life thus reveals more the values of our dominant masculine culture than it is descriptive of different developmental processes (Clark and Wilson 1991, Collard and Law 1989). Secondly, our rapidly changing society has destandardised the modern standard biography. Not only do transitions between specific life stages become uncertain or blurred, also the construction of the life-course as a sequence of distinct periods itself becomes problematic.

Returning to our research, we could affirm that women re-entering the labour market after some time of taking care of their family seem to confirm the predetermined modern female biography. We wonder however whether these are different, separate chronological periods in one's life leading to full development. Do women actually surpass the restrictions of their role as a mother or as a housewife by becoming critically aware of the cultural assumptions underlying these patterns as Mezirow's theory suggests?

Thirdly, we formulate some critical remarks on the learning process and context. Mezirow identifies *transformative learning* as the process of taking on a superior meaning perspective through critical reflection and a free dialogue. The principal function of the adult educator is to bring about, to stimulate and to facilitate this learning process. Critics (Collard and Law 1989, 104) contend that 'the adult educator's role is clearly that of an organiser of enlightenment. But this in turn raises questions about the nature of that enlightenment, about its normative dimension'. Obviously, the central concepts which Mezirow uses to describe transformative learning, like critical reflectivity, free dialogue and superior perspectives, attest of his *normative and decontextualised* vision. He recognises that rationality and critical discourse are contextually bounded by history, socio-cultural situation and individual biography. But he does not see that the same elements which he wants to overcome as distorting actually are necessary and constitutive for giving meaning to the learning process (Clark and Wilson 1991).

Can a learning process that brings together women who need an income and thus a job to survive on the one hand and adult educators working in institutional settings subsidised according to the amount of participants who move on to the regular labour market on the other hand be adequately understood as free, equal or emancipatory?

Biographicity and transitional learning

In what follows we put the critiques on perspective transformation in a *larger framework* on the basis of insights of Finger (1990a, 1990b, 1995) and Alheit (1992, 1995a, 1995b). Finger perceives the role of current adult education as 'some sort of repair activity of the process of modernisation' (1990b, 102). Because modernisation processes increase the tension between the individual and the social or structural, adult education tries to come to terms with this tension. Finger distinguishes two contrary reactions in adult education: some approaches stress the individual at the cost of the structural, others emphasise the structural rather than the individual. Because both trends tend to reproduce the furthering modernisation and to stimulate the counter-productivities it produces, they do not offer a way out of this vicious circle.

Mezirow's theory obviously 'represents the school of adult education that 'solves' today's tension between the individual and society unilaterally in favour of the individual' (Finger 1990a, 27) and therefore cannot account for today's paradoxical reality. Alheit (1995a) describes this kind of approach as a therapeutic paradigm that aims at guiding people to cope with changes and problems in their personal lives. According to him, it loses sight of two things. Due to sweeping societal changes and their consequences for the life-course all people are confronted with *uncertainty*. Collective patterns cannot give solutions for individual risks any longer. Consequently, also adult educators need to look for possible outcomes instead of claiming to provide right answers. Linked up with this, the task of adult education cannot be to adjust its traditional expert role to the changed context. Instead of compensating people's deficiencies, adult education has to become aware of people's competencies (Jansen and Wildemeersch 1995) by trying to know 'how and especially why normal people succeed again and again in mastering crises and living their own lives' (Alheit 1995a, 61). Alheit does not only criticise current developments in adult education, he also proposes an interesting alternative theory which Finger's analysis helps to differentiate from Mezirow's view.

We present Alheit's ideas in contrast with Mezirow's transformative learning by claiming that Alheit relates his theory explicitly to the complex evolutions of modern society. After that we highlight Alheit's view on people's biographies to finally clarify his view on the learning process and learning ecology.

Whereas Mezirow has been criticised for his decontextualism and his clinging to outstripped modern concepts, Alheit places learning processes in the middle of *challenging societal transformations*. As other authors, he analyses the way in which the fast developments of industrial modernity go beyond its own premises leading to counterproductive forces and ultimately to its self-destruction (Finger 1990b, Giddens 1991, Beck 1986). The modernisation of modern societies has considerably closed the social space opened by modernity (Alheit 1995b). To take the issue of women learning for labour back, Alheit elucidates the *paradoxical situation* in which these women find themselves. On the one hand women do have more possibilities and chances because of modern emancipatory processes. On the other hand however, the evolution of these processes has destroyed their liberating power. Continuing economic and socio-cultural changes make participation to the labour market possible for only a limited number of people. Besides it becomes an uncertain and risky business not evidently guaranteeing opportunities for emancipation and self fulfilment. In their lives people have to learn to cope with these disturbing contradictions 'linking the continued promise of social ascent with the experience of actual exclusion' (Alheit 1995b, 167).

Alheit thematises the consequences of the changing societal context for the modern conceptualisation of the life-course: Biography has become a field of learning in which transitions have to be anticipated and coped with (Alheit 1992). As a consequence, Alheit develops a theory of biographical learning, which he distinguishes from other biographical approaches in adult education. We elaborate critically what he calls the compensatory approach because it resembles Mezirow's theory and the therapeutic paradigm. The *compensatory biographical approach* uses the critical life-event concept to understand people's actions. Mezirow (1978) states for example that for adults the sudden loss of a mate or of a job, a change of residence, betrayal or rejection often are disorienting experiences which can start the process of perspective transformation. Alheit responds to this statement that 'not the event itself is decisive, but the biography on which it impacts' (1992, 194). Our interview data support this latter opinion. For many women leaving their husband is an important event in their lives. But if and how they manage and whether it is a critical event in the way Mezirow defines it, if this is an adequate definition at all, depends largely on their biographical being and acting upon the world.

To try to really understand different transitions in people's lives and the learning processes these require, Alheit's concept of *biographicity* (1992, 1995a) is elucidating. Alheit claims a biography to have two dimensions among which there is a dialectical tension, namely an objective and a subjective one, one of *structure* and one of *emergence*. This means that biographical autonomy of action is possible in spite of institutionalised life-course patterns and frontiers in the social context. This action can even react against these structural contexts. 'In our biographies, we do not possess all conceivable opportunities, but within the framework of the limits we are structurally set we still have considerable scope open to us' (Alheit 1995a, 65). Biographicity thus indicates the possibility we have to discover other meaning opportunities for our lives, and these 'unlived lives possess socially explosive force' (Alheit 1995a, 64).

We clarify this by a story of a single woman, mother of two children, whose situation forces her to get a job. She follows a training course and finishes it successfully. But remaining a mother and a housewife and considering the structural lack of good jobs, it is rather impossible for her to combine a time demanding and flexible job on the regular labour market with her other activities. It looks like she stands in front of a blind alley, but she succeeds in finding a way out by taking an undeclared job that gives her more autonomy to chose working hours and enough money to live from. The learning process of this woman cannot fully be understood as a perspective transformation Mezirow is talking about. It rather is a transition this woman has to cope with in her life and her environment. This *transitional learning* influences both the individual and the structural context.

Alheit does not adhere to a hierarchy of transformations and reflectivities as Mezirow does, the one being more liberating or critical than the other, neither to the normative therapeutic paradigm in adult education. He proposes a different conception of the learning process and learning ecology. Referring to the two developments in adult education Finger discerned, Alheit (1995a) agrees that the role of adult education is neither to heal people nor to simply train them. For both trends imply problematic dependencies to respectively a normative social construct and a fast changing society. The real task reserved for adult education is *biographical coaching*, 'the joint discovery by teacher and learner of biographical opportunities for shaping social, occupational and political existence more autonomously' (Alheit 1995a, 68). These insights account better for the learning in some training organisations, where women and adult educators search together for possible ways out of the labour paradox. Some women replace the regular labour market by a social workplace or by other alternative circuits, whereas some educators use part of their market subsidies to create and support these counteractivities.

Conclusion

To conclude, we argue that Alheit's theory offers a clarifying perspective to better understand the learning processes taking place at the backdrop of the contradictory societal situation of opening and closing of the social space. His concepts of biographicity, transitional learning and coaching describe in a more realistic and less normative way the learning of people in current complex society than Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation through critical reflectivity. Biographicity accounts for the dialectical relationship between the individual and the social or structural which is not accessible on a simple reflexive basis (Alheit 1995a, 64). Coached transitional learning does not only transform the perspective of the individual, 'but is the transition to a new quality of self- and world-referentiality - a process that leaves neither the learning subject nor the surrounding context unchanged' (Alheit 1995a, 65).

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A collaborative inter-racial 'border' pedagogy in adult multicultural education classes

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We live in a world where people of multiply-constituted identities must interact and cross borders of race, gender, culture, sexual orientation, and national origin. There is a body of literature within the field of adult and higher education that discusses ways of teaching across these borders, that implicitly recognises to do so is at times controversial, particularly in classes where such issues are the primary course content. However, most of these discussions are theoretical and are influenced by a variety of theoretical orientations, including critical theory and pedagogy (Brookfield 1995; Shor 1996; Welton 1995), feminist theory and pedagogy (Hart 1992; hooks 1994; Tisdell 1995), the adult multicultural education literature (Hayes and Colin 1994; Johnson-Bailey and Cervero 1996; Ross-Gordon 1994), and post-modern educational theories. Indeed, there is a lack of research-based literature that actually examines what happens in classes where issues of race, gender, culture are foregrounded in the curriculum. Thus, the primary purpose of this study was to examine the way power dynamics based on race, gender, culture, sexual orientation were manifested between and among instructors and students in two graduate level classes where diversity and equity issues in education was the primary course content.

Methodology

A qualitative action research study of two different classes of master's level adult students in a course entitled 'Diversity and Equity in Education' team taught by a black woman (Clarice Perry) and a white woman (Libby Tisdell) who are the co-authors of this paper was the design of the study. It was informed by a postmodern feminist and Africentric feminist action research theoretical framework, because these feminisms suggest that the positionality (race, gender, class, sexual orientation) of researchers, teachers, and students affects how one constructs knowledge, how one views knowledge, and how one determines the validity of knowledge claims. We taught the class together, because we represented different positionalities (of race and sexual orientation) which would broaden participants' examination of diversity and equity issues and possibilities for constructing knowledge. Several aspects of our positionality were discussed with the students in the sharing of our own cultural stories the first day of class. As an action research project, the study attempted to document our own and students' practice and ways of constructing knowledge as the class was going on, and focused on ways of improving practice while making use of border pedagogies (critical and feminist) in adult multicultural education classes. As instructor-researchers, we made use of Carr and Kemmis's (1986) four pronged approach to action research (planning, acting, observing, and reflecting), and each class session was planned in light of the data that were collected at the prior session. One class was taught in the summer of 1996, one in the fall of 1996. There were fifteen students (three men, twelve women) in the summer's class, including five students of colour. There were twelve students (four men, eight women) in the Fall class, including three students of colour and one white, hearing-impaired male student.

One woman and one man in the fall class openly acknowledged being lesbian or bisexual. Data collection methods included our own daily teaching journals, daily open-ended questionnaires filled out by students, student papers (including a portion of their final paper where they discussed classroom dynamics), and interviews with several of the students following the courses. Data were analysed according to the constant comparative method.

Findings and discussion

Three major interrelated categories of findings emerged in the study that cannot be separated from their relationship to the multicultural course content, and the 'border pedagogies' that emphasised both cognitive and affective forms of knowledge that informed the study.

Foregrounding the experience of the more marginalised students

By virtue of the course content, the experience of the more traditionally marginalised students, especially the students of colour and the hearing-impaired student was foregrounded in the curriculum. This resulted in the fact that in large-group discussions their voices also tended to be in the foreground, and participants (both the white students and the students of colour) generally wanted to understand what it meant to be African-American, Native American, multiracial, Creole, or to be hearing-impaired. Thus, in both of these classes, these traditionally more marginalised students either tended to talk a lot and/or most of their contributions were treated with genuine interest, and they were seen as being very articulate. In the fall class, when this point was raised, Sam, the hearing-impaired student, suggested that graduate level students who have been traditionally marginalised in the curriculum throughout their schooling experiences are articulate because they have had to be in order to survive and make it in the educational system. Melinda, a white woman, in addressing this point in her final paper, wrote:

> ... Sam's point, about those who are marginalised having to learn to be effective communicators, I did see evidence of this during the class ... It did appear as though the white members of the class had more trouble communicating. Is it due to not having to or not really want to? Do we (I include myself) not want to let others know us because we don't have to? Is that part of our privilege?

These are important and insightful questions.

This foregrounding of the experiences of the more marginalised students was also evident in who students (who were interviewed) indicated they would always remember from this class. Without exception, the white students named the students of colour and the hearing-impaired student, though they indicated this was so because of who these participants were as individuals as opposed to their being members of marginalised groups. However, the peers they picked were in fact members of marginalised groups.

In contrast, there was a reluctance in the class to really deal with gender oppression of white women, particularly in the summer class, or with sexual orientation issues. Thus these issues were more in the background; however they were important underlying issues that affected the dynamics of the classes. Most of the white women, particularly in the summer class, were generally quite quiet. Many of them actually felt silenced and discounted by other students in the class for questioning their silence. One wrote in her final paper: '... the voices that were not heard were perhaps those of white women. Yet each of the white women in the class has achieved in the workplace and has stood up for injustice ...' In speaking about silence and voice, another from the summer class wrote 'white women are socialised to be quiet and not express opinions, it can be dangerous to speak out, especially if you're not expected to'. There also seemed to be a reluctance to deal with gay and lesbian issues, in spite of the fact that Libby discussed her own 'constantly shifting' sexual identity the first day. The identity of one of the lesbian students was briefly referred to once in the large group; another never referred to her sexual identity in the large group but did so in her paper, though the bisexual hearing-impaired male student freely referred to his sexual identity. Nevertheless, whether due to nervousness, apathy, or total acceptance, sexual orientation was not an issue that either group dealt with very much, and a couple of 'straight' students indicated in their writing that they wanted to discuss this more, and one of the women of colour wondered in her final paper if the gay and lesbian students felt silenced. One male student, in referring to one of us as instructors,. said 'I was wishing you would say more, if I'm not being too personal, speaking from your sexual orientation. Sometimes when you brought up your own sexual orientation, it seemed almost apologetic, or sort of brought up as an aside ..., and I wanted to hear more about what that means'. In sum, the relative silence around sexual orientation issues or of the white women and the lesbian students may also be indicative of a propensity to put a hierarchy on the experience of oppression.

A fear of being viewed as an oppressor

A dynamic that seemed to be underlying much of the discussion was a hesitancy or fear of both students and at least one of the instructors (Libby) of being viewed as an oppressor, manifested particularly in the way the group dealt with conflict in very specific ways. First, it was very directly manifested by Libby the first day of the summer class and documented in her journal. One African-American woman who was a guest of one of the students at one point was dominating the discussion. Libby wrote in her journal: 'I was trying to decipher how to deal with her when she kept interrupting ... but then Clarice intervened and I was very glad, because I didn't want to be a white woman silencing an African-American woman ...'

Second, it was manifested in who students were willing to confront. As instructors, we tried to facilitate the discussions to try to give all students a voice. However, when a dominant voice was to be confronted about their tendency to monopolise the discussion, it was actually carried out (probably unconsciously) by a person in the class most like them by the categories of analysis of the class (gender, race, class). For example, in the summer class, Denise, a verbose white Jewish woman, was confronted by another white Jewish woman, and an African-American woman student by Clarice, the African-American female instructor. Also, in the fall class, on a number of occasions, one white male openly disagreed with the white male who tended to defend the status quo.

Third, at no time in the class in the large group did any white student initiate any kind of disagreement or confrontation with a student of colour. By contrast, there were number of occasions where students of colour would disagree with and/or confront each other. An African-American woman confronted the multiracial male student who identified as 'Creole' about some of his remarks about African-American women. Students of colour would disagree with and challenge white students, and white students would sometimes challenge each other. But interestingly, though Monica, an African-American woman in the summer class, was extremely vocal, no one ever confronted her. This is indicative of a fear of being seen as an oppressor, and was confirmed by Anna, a multiracial female (Filipana/Hispanic/Russian Jewish/Anglo) student from the summer class in an interview. She was discussing students' irritation with the overtalking of Denise, one of the white females, and we pointed out that Monica also talked a lot. In asking if this was noticed, she remarked: 'Absolutely! No one's going to mess with her, and their feeling was that if they mess with her, and myself included, that basically I was implying that I was racist...And see! I didn't even bring it up! Look at how shut down I was!... But no, I don't think anybody was going to engage her, and even though they felt that way, they were much more comfortable dealing with Denise'. In referring to the fact that Denise was eventually confronted by another white Jewish woman one student wrote: 'I think conflict was primarily managed by the group through subconsciously choosing a woman in the class as the scapegoat. Whether realising it or not, much of the anger the class was experiencing was expressed onto this one person'. This clearly is indicative of the fact that there is an underlying fear of being seen as an oppressor. This may also account for the relative silence of some students, about their own experience as members of other oppressed groups.

Maintaining or deferring to those with more power and privilege

While the voices of students of colour were generally relatively unchallenged in discussions, there were nevertheless some ways that systemic power and privilege was maintained. First, students tended to be somewhat more deferential to Libby (as the white instructor) who appeared to be viewed as the intellectual content expert, while Clarice (as the African-American instructor) appeared to be viewed as the practice-based and experiential expert.

Students directed questions related to course requirements and assignments more often to Libby than to Clarice. Also, many of the students in their final paper also referred to 'you', which clearly by the context and statement was often a reference primarily to Libby, and secondarily to Clarice. However, nearly all students from both classes, but especially the students of colour, noted the significance of having a person of colour as an instructor for a higher education class. Most of the students had never experienced being taught by an African-American woman, and indicated the significance of this for them. Mike, a multiracial student noted in an interview: 'There were some preconceived notions, and they were wrong, and it's really, and I wouldn't have them now, but I'd never been taught by a black woman before ... When you walked in the room some things came up, and I didn't expect that myself. And then you were really articulate and strong, and you had it going, and wow! ... I thought you'd be the teacher's aide, and not really the co-teacher. Now I clearly have a different perspective'. He went on to discuss dealing with issues about his own identity as a multiracial person, hinting at his own internalised oppression in this regard. Furthermore, nearly all the students, especially those from the fall class, indicated they wanted to hear more from Clarice. One white male student wrote in reaction to the question regarding future recommendations: 'Clarice should talk more. Not Libby less'.

The fact that students from both classes were more deferential to Libby could have been for several reasons. Libby is white, has a doctoral degree, and is a full-time core faculty member in the department. Clarice is African-American, has her MA from Antioch, is an adjunct faculty member, and is working towards her PhD. In society, Libby has white privilege as well as higher educational status. As a full-time core faculty member and advisor to several students in the classes, she also has greater institutional power than Clarice, which may account in part for why the students were more deferential to Libby. One biracial male student noted this and wrote '... I caught myself continually directing my questions to Libby on a regular basis. I do not think it was her colour of skin or ethnic background ... I believe that I have been conditioned by society to respect people a little bit more who hold important titles ... '. Clearly, these institutional factors as well as the oppressed and privileged aspects of each of our identities had an effect both on how we behaved and on how we were viewed by the students. But Libby does have a tendency to dominate the teaching space, particularly around issues related to clarifying cognitive or intellectual points in the readings. This propensity was particularly true in the fall class. Janice, a white female student, wrote about this in her final paper: ' ... [O]ne instructor seemed to clearly hold more power, enforced the time structure of the class session and was readily able to voice her opinions/reactions during discussions. The other instructor did not seem to control so much of the structure and often appeared to be speaking only when addressed specifically ... I was unsure if my intuitions were based on an evidencing of our society's power structure in this setting ... , or if this was merely the differences in preferred teaching techniques of each particular instructor'. We suspect that this is not one or the other, but perhaps both. Libby is also less comfortable than Clarice in dealing with conflict, and Clarice does a better job than Libby about coming up with and facilitating experiential activities in the class. This may be why Libby appeared to be seen as the intellectual expert and Clarice as the practice-based experiential expert.

Second, the systems of power were also maintained in that males tended either not to be confronted, or to be more gently challenged than the women, especially the white women. In spite of the fact that the experiences and contributions of the more traditionally marginalised students were foregrounded in the class, all the males in both of the classes were quite vocal, both the white males and the males of colour. There were actually only three non-disabled white males in the study as a whole, all of whom were quite vocal. Two seemed to be viewed as advocates for those who have been traditionally marginalised, and thus their contributions also appeared to be appreciated by the class as a whole. With only one exception, the male students were seen as being on the side of those who have been marginalised, so in spite of the fact that they were quite vocal, their comments were valued. The male students also tended to respond verbally before the women in the class. This was especially true in the fall class. The fact that power based on gender may have been maintained in some ways was generally not analysed in the large group, though we understand that this was discussed by some of the women in small groups or in informal settings. To some degree, some male students were aware of this, and one wrote in his final paper 'when people did finally give me strong feedback, it came only after Bob [another male student] and I said we wanted to hear it. I felt like a man giving permission to the women in the room to speak their mind'.

Third, some of the forms of maintenance of the status quo were manifested in experiential activities. However, group members were more open to critiquing the systems of power and privilege that were reflected in their behaviour in the experiential activities. This was either because some of these activities were role plays, or because the level of emotional vulnerability and group safety (in the fall class) was high enough to allow for critique.

Lastly, a way that participants maintain systems of power or privilege is in their reliance on individual or psychological analytic tendencies. A large part of the class focused on discussion of structural systems (race, gender, etc.) and institutionalised forms of oppression and privilege. But in their final synthesis paper most of the students who benefited by more social systems of privilege resorted to a humanistic psychological analysis of difference and 'otherness' as individual as opposed to partly socially constructed through social structural systems of oppression and privilege. Students who experienced more systems of oppression tended to focus more on social structures in their analysis.

Conclusions and implications

In light of the findings discussed here, along with additional insights based on our experience teaching the class, we recommend the following practices:

(1) Sharing food during each class session.

(2) The inclusion of practice-based and experiential activities (both in-class and outside assignments) that require an analysis of concepts in relationship to both one's own positionality, as well as analysis of social and educational institutions. Examples include writing one's own cultural story, role plays, interviews with educators and observations of learning activities about multicultural issues, analysis of gender and race issues in movies or the media, etc.

(3) Guidelines for class discussion, especially clear discussion of both the role of instructors and of students in facilitating class discussion.

(4) An honest acknowledgement of tension in the classroom by the instructors.

(5) Closing activities for each class session that take into account affective, emotional, and spiritual dimensions that leave participants with hope even though we will always be unfinished in dealing with these issues.

(6) Requiring collaborative small groups of students to create and facilitate an experiential activity.

While this study is limited to an examination of these issues in two adult multicultural education classes, it offers some insight about what 'border pedagogy' looks like and therefore makes a valuable contribution to the adult multicultural literature.

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The boundaries of education for active citizenship: institutional and community contexts

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The 1980s and early 1990s in Aotearoa/New Zealand was a period of economic, social and political upheaval characterised by low levels of capital accumulation and high levels of unemployment and underemployment. It was also a period when many democratic institutions were under attack from the forces of multinational capital. A previous publication (Tobias and Henderson 1996) has documented some key trends and patterns in the provision of adult education programmes for active citizenship in one New Zealand city in this period. We demonstrated there that there was a resurgence of collective self-education, generally taking place within the context of social movements. This paper seeks to build on these findings.

Elsewhere (see for example Tobias 1990 and 1997) I have documented the nature and impact of policy changes instituted in the 1980s and early 1990s by successive governments under the influence of new right ideologies. Overall, these policies were designed to expose New Zealand institutions, both private and public, more fully to the competitive forces of multinational capitalism. With increasing privatisation of state services they also constituted a direct attack on the welfare state. I have also examined the theoretical perspectives and historical traditions that inform different interpretations and understandings of citizenship and adult education for active citizenship (See Tobias, forthcoming). Concepts of citizenship, citizenship education and democracy are controversial: their meanings are historically and materially grounded, and these conditions and the traditions and discourses to which they give rise not only establish boundaries on what counts as legitimate educational policy and practice within the various institutional and community contexts: they also give shape to the many different forms and practices of adult education for active citizenship.

Traditions of adult education for active citizenship reflected in policies and programmes of different organisations vary widely. They include conservative and pragmatic traditions, within which little if any emphasis is given to the provision of active citizenship programmes, except in relation to the preservation of traditional institutions and forms of authority. They also include liberal traditions, which emphasise the importance of making a contribution to adult education for active citizenship, provided it is a rational, balanced and 'neutral' contribution. Finally, there are a range of progressive and radical traditions within which organisations and institutions actively seek to develop policies and strategies of engagement in adult education for active citizenship and in particular encourage their members to provide education and action that involves political commitment.

One aim of this paper is to identify the contributions made by educational institutions (schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities) and voluntary adult education organisations between 1983 and 1993 in providing adult education programmes for active citizenship. A second purpose is to explore some of the ways in which these programmes for active citizenship were shaped by organisational and institutional imperatives as well as by historical traditions.

Methodology

This paper draws on one small section of a database gathered for a very much larger, ongoing project designed to examine trends and patterns in the provision of education and training for adults since 1983 in one New Zealand city (See Tobias, forthcoming). The project has required a systematic search of all columns of every issue of *The* (*Christchurch*) *Press*, the main city newspaper, published in 1983, 1985, 1987, 1989, 1991 and 1993. In addition organisational brochures, calendars, files and records have been searched and where possible interviews with organisers have been undertaken to supplement the information available from other sources.

For the purpose of this paper, adult education programmes for active citizenship have been defined as programmes (including courses, classes, workshops, seminars, hui, conferences, study-tours, discussion, study and support groups, talks, lectures, symposia, forums, public meetings and demonstrations) intended to promote, inform, analyse, critique, challenge, or raise public consciousness about any social, economic, cultural or political policies or issues of public concern. Despite the very considerable breadth of scope of this definition it is limited by the fact that we have included only those adult education programmes that focus explicitly and deliberately on public issues in the ways set out above. Programmes that are less explicit have not been included.

Findings

General

In the introduction it was pointed out that the late 1980s and early 1990s saw a resurgence of educational programmes for active citizenship. The overall number of these programmes increased substantially over the period, from 249 in 1983 to 462 in 1991, falling away a little to 424 in 1993. It should be noted however that educational programmes for active citizenship constituted only about 8% of all educational programmes for adults identified over the period and that the proportions fell from 10% in 1983 to 6.5% in 1993. Most of these programmes were organised by 'non-educational' groups, that is, groups that did not have adult education as a primary function. Sixty-six percent of all educational programmes for active citizenship were organised by 550 of these groups. Fourteen percent were provided by voluntary adult education organisations and 12% by educational institutions, with the balance being arranged by state and local authority organisations. Much of the increase in activity in the latter part of the period can be attributed to the actions of 'non-educational' voluntary organisations and groups. Between 1983 and 1991 the number of programmes organised by these groups increased from 175 to 321. It then fell away again somewhat to 289 in 1993.

Despite the fact that the overall contribution made by educational institutions and voluntary adult education organisations to adult education for active citizenship was relatively small, this contribution was not insignificant. This is particularly evident if we focus exclusively on the provision of longer courses, classes and discussion groups and exclude single meetings, demonstrations and workshops. Educational institutions and voluntary adult education organisations between them organised 70 of these longer programmes over the period.

Educational institutions

A total of seven secondary schools and five tertiary institutions were found to have contributed 241 programmes of adult education for active citizenship during the years under review.

Schools:

Seven out of the 14 schools in Christchurch that received state funding for community education contributed a total of 40 programmes of adult education for active citizenship over the six years covered by this research. About half of these programmes were organised by one central city school, Hagley Community College, which has an historical commitment to adult and community education. Issues addressed included 'What's happening to jobs?', 'The Educational Reforms', 'A beginner's guide to New Zealand politics', 'Women in History' and 'Lesbian Perspectives'.

Christchurch Polytechnic:

Christchurch Polytechnic contributed a total of 58 programmes of adult education for active citizenship. It offered seven programmes in 1983, nine in 1985, ten in 1987, ten in 1989, fourteen in 1991 and eight in 1993.

The polytechnic led the way in addressing gender issues. This was achieved primarily through its Next Step Centre (which built up a very wide range of programmes for women), but also through other programmes for both women and men. Thirty-eight of the polytechnic's 58 programmes focused on gender issues. They covered a wide range of issues that affect women's lives and included courses or seminars on such topics as: 'Women's issues', 'The male system', 'Women and politics', 'Women and the bomb', 'Women and current affairs', 'What is Feminism?', 'Aids and women', 'Issues for working women', 'Women's lives' and 'Women and the health system'. To a much smaller extent the polytechnic also led the way in providing nine programmes focusing on media issues.

University of Canterbury:

The University of Canterbury contributed a total of 105 programmes of adult education for active citizenship during the six years covered by this research. Eighty-four of them were organised by the Centre for Continuing Education. Fifteen programmes were held in 1983, 9 in 1985, 18 in 1987, 29 in 1989, 16 in 1991, and 18 in 1993.

Twenty-six programmes addressed environmental issues. They dealt with such topics as 'Energy, politics and society', 'Current issues in resource management', 'Trees as an urban resource', 'Organic food production', 'The national parks in New Zealand', 'Alternative energy systems', 'Biology and management of rivers', 'Ecology and you' and 'Resource management: what now?'. Twenty programmes addressed economic and social policy issues. They covered a wide range of topics including 'Economics and the New Zealand economy', 'The family courts system', 'Adoption today: current trends', 'The new residential tenancies act', 'Measuring poverty', 'Child protection' and 'Community action'.: Nineteen programmes addressed issues in international affairs. They included: 'The Middle East in crisis', 'Socialist societies of East Asia', 'France in the Pacific: colonisation and de-colonisation', 'Development inequalities of the third world', 'Conflict in the Middle East', 'The Rushdie affair' and 'Fiji: multiculturalism, democracy and development'. Sixteen programmes addressed gender issues. They included: 'Perspectives on women: an interdisciplinary approach', 'The female experience', 'Women reshaping culture', 'Women and religion', 'Public and private worlds', 'Women's thinking: men's world' and 'In a different voice: feminist perspectives in philosophy'.

Eleven programmes dealt with general and political issues. They included: 'The police and social conflict in New Zealand', 'The eclipse of equality', 'Democracy, mass culture and the arts', 'Power and people: issues in New Zealand politics' and 'The changing law: real people, real problems and new law'. Eight programmes focused on Maori or bi-cultural issues. Topics included 'Land, language and culture: the Maori in the modern world', 'Maori oral traditions' and 'Biculturalism: issues of interaction between Maori and Pakeha'. Finally, in addition to those already referred to, three programmes specifically addressed peace issues and two focused on educational issues.

Other tertiary institutions:

Three other tertiary institutions contributed a total of twenty-four programmes of adult education for active citizenship during the six years covered by this research. Lincoln University, a constituent college of the University of Canterbury until 1991 when it became an independent University, contributed 12 programmes. As befits a former agricultural college, most programmes focused on horticultural and environmental issues. The Christchurch Clinical School of Medicine, a constituent school of the University of Otago, contributed nine programmes, all on health issues. In addition, Christchurch College of Education contributed a total of ten programmes.

Voluntary adult education organisations:

Fourteen voluntary adult education organisations and community groups were identified that contributed a total of 294 programmes of adult education for active citizenship during the six years covered by this research. Five general interest adult education organisations including the WEA were identified along with nine special interest adult education groups. Seventy-four percent of the programmes, however, were organised by one organisation – the Canterbury WEA.

Canterbury Workers' Educational Association (WEA):

The Canterbury WEA contributed a total of 188 programmes of adult education for active citizenship during the six years covered by this research. Twenty-two programmes were organised in 1983, 17 in 1985, 34 in 1987, 37 in 1989, 40 in 1991, and 38 in 1993. In addition 29 programmes were arranged in co-operation with other voluntary organisations and community groups.

Sixty-two programmes organised by the WEA provided a general background on current issues or dealt with a number of issues rather than focusing exclusively on one. Twelve programmes were organised in 1983; 11 in 1985; 9 in 1987; 12 in 1989; 8 in 1991; and 10 in 1993. They included programmes on the following: 'Current affairs', 'Current affairs in-depth', 'Social change and human belief', 'Socialism', 'Behind the news', 'Freedom! What is it?', 'Socialism and New Zealand today', 'Who's running this country?', 'Why vote anyway?' and 'Focus on politics'.

The WEA also led the way in raising economic and social policy issues for discussion. Thirty such programmes were identified, 19 of which dealt with economic and employment issues. They included: 'Trade unions and politics', 'Public and private control in New Zealand', 'Unemployment: causes and effects', 'Issues affecting working people', 'The employment contracts bill', 'Disemployment' and 'The power of debt'. On social policy issues 11 programmes included: 'Understanding violence: the Roper report', 'Prison Reform: Te ara hou – The new way', 'Public housing' and 'What is happening to your welfare state'.

A third major strength of the WEA was its contribution in the field of international affairs. Many international and foreign policy issues were discussed within the context of its general current affairs programmes. In addition, a further 24 programmes dealt with issues in the field of international affairs. They included programmes on: 'Overseas aid and its implications', 'The struggle by Kanaks for independence in Kanaky', 'Star wars: will it work?', 'The religious background to the Arab/Israeli situation', 'Foreign affairs and defence: what is the relationship?', 'The Gulf crisis', 'The United Nations: a positive approach', 'Cuba today' and 'Foreign control'.

Many of the above programmes as well as some in the social policy field addressed peace issues. However seven additional programmes were identified that dealt specifically with issues of peace and violence. Fifteen programmes addressing environmental issues were identified. They included: 'Research and the conservation of birds', 'Environmental security: agenda for the 90s' and 'Environmental issues'. Health issues were the focus of ten programmes including: 'Soil and health', 'Employment, Education and Health', 'The World Health Organisation' and 'Women and health'. Eight programmes addressed issues of biculturalism or racism. They included: 'Racism, multiculturalism and the WEA', 'The Treaty of Waitangi', 'Exploring culture' and 'Ngai Tahu land claims'.

Although no programmes focusing on gender issues were offered in 1983 or 1985, the situation changed in 1987. In addition to those on women's health already referred to, 22 further programmes addressing gender issues were organised during the latter part of the period under review. They included: 'Women and workers', 'Suffrage — not just a woman's affair' and 'International women'. Finally, nine programmes addressing educational issues were organised by the WEA. Most focused on post-compulsory education and included: 'What are we educating for?', 'Learning for life', and 'Literacy, learning and liberation'.

Locality or community-based organisations:

Four community or locality-based voluntary organisations were identified that contributed 17 adult education programmes for active citizenship addressing a wide range of local issues. The most active of these organisations in the field of adult education for active citizenship was the Cracroft Community Centre. Each year from 1985 it organised some form of public celebration and meeting or forum to mark Women's Suffrage Day. In addition one other programme was organised annually dealing with current issues. Other organisations that offered at least one programme were the Rangiora Adult Education Committee, Risingholme Community Centre and Linwood Community House.

Special interest organisations:

Nine of the voluntary organisations had a special interest in one particular field or aspect of adult education. They arranged a total of 60 programmes over the years.

In relation to bicultural issues and issues arising out of the Treaty of Waitangi six programmes were identified that were organised by special interest voluntary adult education organisations, with four being organised by the Waitangi Action and Learning Coalition and Project Waitangi. They included protest action and other meetings focused on 'What the Treaty means'.

In the field of parenting and family life education the Parents Centre and the Family Life Education Council contributed a total of 14 programmes focusing on public issues. These included programmes on 'Violence and aggression', 'TV and young children' and 'Alcohol and the family'. The College of Natural Medicine organised four programmes that addressed issues in the field of health. Two organisations concerned with theological and biblical education – College House (16) and the Bible College (2) – organised a total of 18 programmes on a wide range of issues. In addition, the New Zealand Institute of Management organised two programmes one on race relations and the other on economic growth.

The Kitchen Table, a women's economic awareness group which arose out of a WEA programme in 1987, organised a total of ten programmes between 1987 and 1991 on issues such as 'Health cuts and bad employers' and 'Socialism meets feminism'. By 1993 a new feminist adult education organisation, the Women's Learning Centre, was active and that year organised six programmes addressing such issues as 'Invisible women' and 'Feminism and everyday life'.

Discussion

We have seen above some of the ways in which the various organisations in Christchurch contributed, or failed to contribute, to the field of adult education for active citizenship over the period covered by this research. Our findings suggest that some significant elements within the democratic tradition which underlies the provision of adult education for active citizenship were alive and well. At a time when there was a resurgence in the forces of multinational capitalism and when progressive and expansive concepts of citizenship, and especially notions of social citizenship, were under attack from the New Right there is evidence of considerable popular resistance and something of a counter-resurgence of democratic and progressive groups and movements. Among other things many groups sought to mount campaigns to promote or defend their rights, and many of these campaigns included significant components of adult education for active citizenship. Our findings confirm that, in spite of the growth in the number of private education and training establishments, they appear to have made no contribution whatsoever to the field of adult education for active citizenship. Although the number of adult education programmes for active citizenship grew substantially over the period, this growth could not match the growth in other forms of adult and tertiary education. The evidence also suggests that 'non-educational' community groups and voluntary organisations mounted most of the campaigns to promote and defend citizenship rights and organised by far the largest number of programmes of adult education for active citizenship. Educational institutions and other voluntary adult education organisations played only a limited role. In drawing boundaries this fact is highly significant. Nevertheless the contributions of some of these organisations were significant, especially in providing the more substantial programmes. The WEA's contribution in particular was important, and the University of Canterbury's was only a little less so.

The evidence suggests that voluntary adult education organisations such as the WEA were somewhat less constrained than educational institutions in seeking to establish links with several popular movements. Despite this, such organisations were subject to severe constraints. Pressures generated by limited resources and the constant effort to raise funds from the state and other sources inhibit such organisations from engaging in some political activities. In addition, its liberal traditions, democratic base and the fact that its members include people of all political persuasions also limited the possibility of undertaking some forms of education and action that required political commitment. In spite of this, the WEA contributed to most if not all of the public debates and movements of the times. The essence of this contribution lay in its provision of a 'neutral platform' for public debate. For the most part the WEA's role was that of exposing ideas, policies, structures and institutions to critical analysis rather than that of leading in the advancement of new ideas, actions and movements. Small special interest groups such as the Kitchen Table and the Women's Learning Centre appear to have been better placed to promote and foster feminist ways of seeing and thinking. Nevertheless the WEA does appear to have played a role in the late 1980s, along with other groups and organisations, in keeping alive the democratic progressive and socialist traditions that the New Right was seeking to marginalise.

The evidence suggests that most educational institutions tended to maintain their distance from popular campaigns and movements, from other organisations involved in adult education for active citizenship, and especially from those engaged in radical forms of adult education for active citizenship. It seems that no attempt was made, even in the liberal tradition, to offer a coherent and sustained series of programmes to examine the issues raised by the revolution in state policies during the 1980s and 1990s. There is little to suggest that any educational institution developed a coherent policy or strategic plan for the provision of adult education programmes for active citizenship. The evidence suggests that they did in fact undertake little if any systematic planning of their contributions to adult education for active citizenship, and in failing to do so, it may be argued, they served to legitimate the ideologies of the new right and the forces of multinational capitalism.

There was one exception to the general principle that educational institutions tended to distance themselves from popular campaigns and movements. The Christchurch Polytechnic, which generally played a very limited role in the field of adult education for active citizenship, took on an important leadership role in raising the consciousness of women and men on issues of gender inequity. In addition, on occasions other educational institutions took on secondary roles in supporting groups involved in movement-based education. The kind and level of support varied from that of organising joint programmes to that of providing venues, 'tutor hours' and other resources to assist groups engaged in organising educational programmes for active citizenship.

Few educational institutions could draw on strong traditions of support for adult education for active citizenship. Schools-based programmes of adult and community education had grown serendipitiously in the 1950s and 1960s with few clear-cut policies or statements of principle to guide them. Although new policies were being developed in the 1980s and early 1990s, it seems that most schools, with the one exception of Hagley Community College. Hagley Community College demonstrated little if any commitment to adult education for active citizenship. Within the adult and community education programmes at most schools traditions of conservatism and pragmatism reigned supreme.

Of all the educational institutions it is the University of Canterbury that has the longest historical tradition to liberal engagement in adult education for active citizenship. It is therefore not surprising that it made a larger contribution than any other institution, in particular through its Centre for Continuing Education. This contribution especially in relation to environmental, social and international issues was a significant one. Despite this however its contributions were uneven. It would appear that there was little systematic planning and that the provision of programmes hinged largely on the interests and commitments of individual staff members.

Conclusion

In this paper I have provided a picture of the contributions of the various educational institutions and adult education organisations to the field of adult education for active citizenship in one city in Aotearoa/New Zealand between 1983 and 1993 - a period of considerable upheaval. One key conclusion that may be drawn from the evidence is that although from one perspective adult education for active citizenship was alive and well in the early 1990s, this could not be attributed to the work of professional educators and adult educators. Indeed many professional educators would exclude much of the work of 'non-education' organisations from their definitions of education and would reject any notion of working alongside these organisations to develop programmes for active citizenship. On the contrary there is some evidence to suggest that these educators who are largely employed by educational institutions and private educational establishments tend to become captured by the conservative imperatives that drive organisations to respond pragmatically to the demands of the market. In response to this increasing conservatism, often clothed in the false garments of postmodernism, I have tried in this paper to highlight the value of an inclusive approach both to the drawing of boundaries of what counts as adult education for active citizenship and also to the practice of policy and programme development in this field.

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Concerns about literacy skills of older adults

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The way adults use written information they encounter in daily life is a growing concern in many industrialised countries. The ability to respond on documents such as safety rules on the workplace, manuals for new technology, cheque books, prescriptions, maps, tables and graphs seems to be problematic for increasing numbers of citizens. Today, adults need a higher level of literacy to function well: society has become more complex and low skill jobs are disappearing. Therefore, inadequate levels of literacy among a broad section of the population potentially might threaten the strength of economies and the social cohesion of nations (OECD/Statcan 1995).

The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) was a collaborative effort by seven countries with the support of three intergovernmental organisations (OECD, UNESCO Institute for Education and the European Union) to get insight into the level of literacy of their populations. A large sample of adults (ranging from 1500 to 8000 per country) in the US, Canada, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland and the Netherlands were given the same wide-ranging test of their literacy skills during the autumn of 1994.

The first international, comparative results were published in the OECD/Statcan report 'Literacy, Economy and Society' in 1995. The overall Dutch results will be published in a country report (Houtkoop and van der Kamp in press). A specific grant, however, was offered by the Dutch Foundation for Educational Research for an over-sampling of older adults. This paper will be focused on the results of older adults.

The reasons for extra attention for the literacy skills of older adults are obvious. First of all the demographic developments must be mentioned. In all European countries the number of people of sixty years and older will increase sharply. Seventeen percent of the 500 millions of inhabitants in Europe is over sixty years old, in the year 2000 this percentage will be twenty percent. In the United States, more than twenty percent of the population is older than 65 years. This percentage will also raise until 2000 (van der Kamp 1991).

In general life circumstances of the elderly are not always easy. On the one hand there is a growing number of older people who are well educated, have a good income and have leisure time. In the world of advertising those are called 'GRAMPIES', which means 'Growing Retired Active Monied Persons in an Excellent State'. On the other hand there are older people who have little more than primary education, for example in the Netherlands 50 percent of the people over sixty-five. Many older people have a low income. Especially older widows are often isolated and are confronted with problems in the field of culture, health and care. For the latter the ability to participate in a complex, democratic society might have great preventive significance. This demands basic skills such as literacy and numeracy.

Because of the process of ageing of the labour force, older employees will have to contribute more to the productivity of organisations (Tuijnman and van der Kamp 1991). During the last decade, however, in large numbers they have been expelled from the labour market. This is not only a personal problem for these employees, but they have also become an extensive public charge. Also in this respect a sufficient level of literacy skills of their ageing population seems to be an important prerequisite for economic competitiveness and social cohesion.

Until recently, however, a large-scale insight into the literacy level of the Dutch population was lacking. That was a good reason for Dutch government to seize the opportunity to participate in the joint venture of IALS.

IALS, however, tried to assess literacy skills from a cross-cultural, globalisation point of view. It is also important to take into account the more contextualised perspective of the older adults themselves. That is why additional qualitative research was carried out among a selection of older adults who participated in the IALS assessment.

Research questions

a) What are the literacy skills of older adults (50-75) in comparison to those of other adults?

b) What are the literacy skills of different age-categories of older adults in relation to relevant background variables?

c) In which literacy contexts older adults experience problems, what kinds of coping-strategies they develop and what are possible intervention-strategies to help them?

Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of IALS has been derived from the former NALS and LSUDA studies in the US and Canada. These studies were inspired by the Young Adult Literacy Survey in 1986 (Montigny, Kelly and Jones 1991). This study broke with the traditional stance on literacy assessment. Over the years, literacy had been viewed as a fixed set of skills defined and measured by a single score, with results being applicable in a wide range of contexts (van der Kamp 1997). This early conception portrayed literacy as an ability distributed along a single continuum, with higher scores indicating increasing amounts of that ability. From this point of view, a single point on the continuum is selected as a standard that separates the 'illiterates' from the 'literates'. Critics of this approach have pointed out the that the estimated size of the illiteracy problem will vary widely as a function of the particular standard or cut-point selected (OECD/Statcan 1995). In contrast to previous literacy surveys, the theoretical approach of YALS, NALS, LSUDA and also IALS made possible the gathering of data that yielded evidence for three distinct aspects of literacy: prose literacy, document literacy and quantitative literacy. 'Prose literacy' contains the knowledge and skills needed to understand and use information from texts including editorials, news stories, poems and fiction. 'Document literacy' contains the knowledge and skills required to locate and use information contained in various formats, including job applications, payroll forms, transportation, schedules, maps, tables and graphics. 'Quantitative literacy' contains the knowledge and skills required to apply arithmetic operations, either alone or sequentially, to numbers embedded in printed materials, such as balancing a cheque-book, figuring out a tip, completing an order form or determining the amount of interest on a loan from an advertisement. This new perspective allowed for the development of calibrated scales for each of these aspects of literacy. Within this conception, literacy is a more complex ability, while within the more traditional approaches literacy often was dichotomised and as a consequence 'illiterates' were stigmatised.

The literacy skills assessed in IALS have been limited to written and printed materials. Productive literacy skills will not be assessed because of pragmatic reasons. In this phase it would be too ambitious to measure it within the same assessment. Another dimension that will be measured is the level of cognitive complexity of literacy tasks. These cognitive operations are locating, cycling, integration and generating, The assumption is that more complex operations will be more difficult. The literacy tasks of IALS refer to different functional contexts such as home, citizenship and work.

As far as the relation between literacy and ageing concerns, former research (UNESCO, 1995) showed a strong negative correlation mainly attributed to the lower educational levels of older people. There is not much known about other age-related factors influencing literacy competence. Because of the low level of education of older adults it was expected that they would have lower scores than the younger adults. As women have less education than men, another expectation was that men would do better on the IALS literacy tasks.

Design of the study

In the Netherlands the total sample of adults was 3090 between 16 and 75 years old. Checked on population parameters this sample appeared rather representative for the Dutch population. The number of people between 50-75 (in this paper the 'older adults') in the sample was 918. The data of all participating countries were used for an Item Response Theory (IRT) Analysis by Educational Testing Service in Princeton. IRT is an advanced psychometric technique for the scaling of both items and respondents. Three satisfactory scales could be constructed: prose, document and quantitative literacy. The scores on these scales can vary from 0-500, the scores have been divided into 5 levels from 1 (badly) to 5 (excellently).

In the Netherlands, 40 in-depth interviews were gathered among a selection of older adults who participated in the main assessment to answer the third research question and to get insight into the perception of their literacy competence by the older people themselves.

Results

Literacy skills according the IALS assessment

An extensive research report was published by van der Kamp and Scheeren (1996), this paper will be limited to the most striking results. These main findings are that the scores of adults over 50 are significantly lower on all scales than those of adults under 50. Only on the quantitative scale the decrease with age is less than on the other scales. The average score of adults under 50 is at level 3, but the average score of older adults is at level 2. These results are shown in Table 1 for all three scales.

Although there is quite some variance in the score profile of the older group especially between the groups of 50-64 and 65-75, nearly sixty percent have scores at level 1 or 2, the more problematic levels of literacy skills.

In Figure 1 the adult development of literacy skills by age is shown for the document scale. There is a sharp decrease after the age of 50. The three scales show about the same pattern, so the correlation between the different skills seems to be rather high. Only the quantitative skills reveal a slightly less decrease at older age than the other literacy skills.

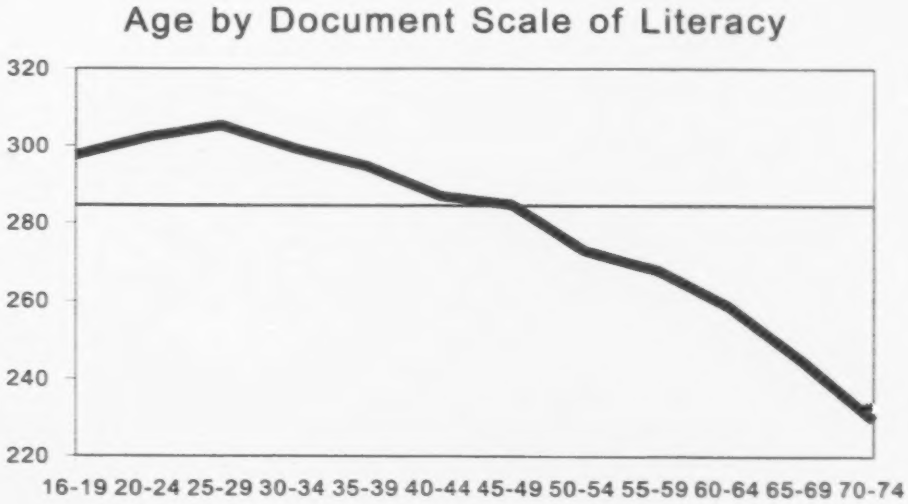
The differences between the two age-groups can be explained to a large extent to the differences in level of initial education, but analysis of covariance revealed that there are also specific age-related factors influencing the literacy abilities of older people (van der Kamp and Scheeren 1996).

The results also show remarkable differences within the group of older adults. Multiple regression analysis revealed that educational level in the first place, but also gender and even participation in adult education significantly influence literacy performance.

Table 1. Proportion of population in age-groups over and under 50 years at each literacy level (all scales, levels 4 and 5 have been taken together)

1a PROSE				
	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4/5
16-49	6.0	22.3	53.1	18.5
50-75	22.2	40.6	33.4	3.7
1b DOCUMENT				
	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4/5
16-49	6.0	19.3	51.4	23.3
50-75	21.2	39.7	32.7	6.4
1c QUANTITATIVE				
	level 1	level 2	level 3	level 4/5
16-49	6.6	20.9	48.7	23.8
50-75	17.9	34.6	38.0	9.5

Figure 1



Also labour participation tends to be a positive factor on literacy competence, but this can not be shown in the multiple regression analysis due to the fact that relatively few older adults in the sample still have a job. Older women do not differ from men on the prose scale, but score significantly lower on the document and quantitative scales, probably due to classic role behaviour.

Literacy skills according to the older adults themselves

Older adults have in general lower literacy scores than the other adults. But the question is whether this implicates that older adults experience more problems in daily life.

In the additional qualitative research many of the interviewed older people said that they do not experience major problems in daily life in situations in which literacy skills are involved. As long as they can find reasonable solutions for their literacy needs in daily life they claim that they are not in trouble. But one of the findings of the qualitative study is that many of the older adults are very keen in avoiding situations in which literacy is needed, especially document literacy and literacy related to technology (manuals etc). A majority of the older adults rely on their relatives and acquaintances.

'Instructions? I do not understand them and I do not want to understand them. I ask my children, that is much easier.', as one of the interviewees put it. 'If I have the chance to rely on somebody else, I will do so..', according to another.

Furthermore, older adults are more used to behave according classical role patterns. A lot of older women do not have much experience with regard to document and quantitative tasks. One of them expresses this as follows: 'Documents and instructions are not my problem, that is the area of my husband.'

These classical role patterns and their dependence on others make a lot of older people vulnerable, especially after important changes in life such as a loss of a partner or relatives. Many older adults also rely on the younger generation for specific support in daily life literacy tasks.

One of the major coping-strategies has already been mentioned. A large number of older adults try to avoid difficult literacy tasks. They make an appeal to someone else, most of the time their children. Sometimes they ask neighbours, colleagues at work, friends and other acquaintances for help. 'I do not have to write at work and all my private documents were filled in by my colleagues', one of the interviewees says. The quality of their social network is important in this respect. Most of the interviewed older persons are not afraid to ask institutions for information for example when they experience difficulties with document-reading. For some specific documents they hire professional help such as tax-consultants, notaries, accountants.

It is remarkable that a large number of the interviewed older adults said that they like to read all kinds of literature and puzzle frequently. When they experience difficulties, they seek information in libraries, dictionaries and encyclopaedias. In this area they help themselves. If it is necessary to use difficult manuals and complicated apparatus they look for alternatives. They do not use, for instance, a cash dispenser but go to the counter of a bank or a post office. During the interviews many older adults complained of complicate documents and instructions in combination with complex machines. In this field there is a lot to improve.

Some of the older adults need literacy skills because of voluntary work or other social activities. They force themselves to learn all the skills they need to fulfil their task successfully. A woman of 74 years old said: 'I learned it by doing it. I was secretary and chairman of a union for elderly. If it is of interest for you, there is a lot to learn.' This is a reason why many older adults try to improve their literacy skills. In this area there seems possibilities to encourage older adults.

Learning programmes for older adults must fit with the their interests. Many older adults are aimed at the direct functionality and practical usefulness in daily life of the subject matter they learn. Some of the interviewees told that they were not very motivated by a number of literacy tasks in the adult literacy survey because these tasks were not of practical use for them in daily life (for example the hiring interview).

Discussion

Although IALS recognised the importance of social coherence (OECD/Statcan 1995), the rationale behind the study mainly was the concern of international organisations and policy makers with the global economic competitiveness and the literacy skills needed on the workplace. This reality certainly is important and cannot be denied. But it is also important to take into account the perspective of the people themselves within and outside the workforce. Our qualitative inquiry revealed some discrepancies between this global view and the personal view of older adults on the significance of literacy skills in daily life.

Still it is obvious that older adults in general are a group-at-risk. Because of their low level of literacy skills many older people not only have a bigger chance to loose their job but also to risk social exclusion. The latter seems especially the case for older women. Although many older adults with a low level of literacy skills succeed in developing coping strategies (such as avoiding behaviour and the support of their social network), their general position remain vulnerable within the context of economic and socio-cultural developments like rationalisation and individualisation.

Recently there is much discussion in the Netherlands on the legitimation of the growing field of educational activities for older adults. Our quantitative analysis has shown that participation in adult education might be effective to enhance literacy skills of older adults. Our qualitative inquiry, however, has also revealed that education as an intervention is still not very attractive for many (lower educated) adults. This may be due to former bad experiences and stereotype perceptions of education. So, the challenge for adult educators will be to develop new attractive pathways of learning also for older adults.

One the other hand it is not fair just to blame the victim and to recommend strongly adult education as the only remedy for 'risk groups'. The impenetrability and unnecessary complexity of many prescriptions, manuals and officially documents is not only for older people a plague. Improvement of the design process of many functional documents in the so-called 'information society' is no luxury. Designers should closely co-operate with older persons themselves to understand the specific problems of older people.

This study has been carried out within the framework of the International Adult Literacy Survey. IALS offered an excellent opportunity for the participating countries to gain insight into the reading and numeracy skills of their adult populations. Until now such a large-scale empirical study was missing. The international data-set will make it possible to compare the Dutch findings for older adults with those of the other participating countries. In spite the need and relevance of IALS a lot of work remains to be done. Writing and speaking, for example, are domains of literacy still to be explored. IALS also was a one-shot approach. Important research questions concern the obsolescence and increase of literacy skills in relation to ageing, labour participation, participation in adult education and social participation. A correlational kind of research can give us indications, but longitudinal research might give us more insight into the development and obsolescence of literacy skills across the lifespan.

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Greenhouse or ghetto? A comparison between ideological and multicultural adult education

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Postmodernism celebrates differences; it stresses the relativity of universalism and the normality of pluralism. A seeming unity may conceal the exclusion of minorities, while a recognised variety can do them justice. Seen from this perspective, postmodernism claims to be an emancipatory endeavour, but at the same time its outspoken relativism can have the opposite effect. For Brooker (quoted in Biesta 1993, 128), it remains a question whether marginalised groups are thereby 'empowered or lost in a centreless world, or worse, neutralised in the flattery of publicity and imitation'.

In the field of adult education, a Dutch form of ideological particularism called *pillarisation* and the Canadian version of multiculturalism are two examples of pluralism which both came to life before postmodernism was 'invented'. A comparison between Dutch pillarisation and Canadian multiculturalism may contribute to the continuing debate on the emancipatory aspects of pluralistic education.

The rise and decline of Dutch pillarisation

In 1917, a change in the Dutch constitution brought universal suffrage and put an end to the school struggle which had divided the Netherlands for a century. Although the Christian character of public instruction had been laid down in 1815 with the establishment of the monarchy, Catholics and many Protestants frequently expressed their strong objections to this arrangement. Catholics, who were subjected to formal and informal discrimination ever since the Protestant Low Countries had obtained their independence from Catholic Spain in 1648, turned against the fact that the inspection of the public elementary schools was largely in the hands of clergymen who belonged to the official Dutch Reformed Church. At the same time, the Dutch Reformed Church itself came under attack from within.

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a *Reveil* (Revival) movement in different parts of Europe, criticising the rationalistic tendencies in modern Protestantism. Its supporters called for a return to the values of religious orthodoxy and personal piety. In 1834, many traditionally-minded Protestants left the rather liberal Dutch Reformed Church and demanded the opportunity to disseminate their more conventional beliefs in the public schools. Later on, orthodox Calvinists intensified the school struggle and insisted on the right to have their own institutions with a denominational identity. These so-called *kleine luyden* (ordinary people) left the Dutch Reformed Church in 1886 and joined forces with more well-to-do Protestants who had already separated in the 1830s.

In 1848, a constitution intended to promote a moderate parliamentary democracy had been established in the Netherlands; the Liberals became the most influential force in Dutch politics. Among several innovations, the new constitution included the right of association and gatherings. Catholic and orthodox Calvinist leaders made grateful use of this right to build their own voluntary associations and thus to organise and educate their respective constituencies (Van Gent 1987). The Liberals, who liked to see themselves as the guardians of the 'national interest', rejected this kind of particularism; in order not to be crushed under its wheels, however, they felt obliged to join the denominational bandwagon under the guise of 'neutral' agencies. Towards the end of the century, a fourth ideological power emerged, the Socialist workers' movement, which soon formed its own organisational structure to defend, as a 'red family', the interests and values of the working class.

The battle for the right to their own educational institutions with a denominational identity was pursued by Catholics and Calvinists with great vigour. Although they differed highly in their religious outlooks, they co-operated closely on the political level and thus gained a major influence on the affairs of the Dutch state. The *pacification* of 1917, supported also by the Socialists who feared any kind of capitalist state education, implied the equal financial treatment of private and public primary schools. Later on, this dual system was extended to every form of education.

Since each denomination not only wished to have its own educational institutions, but also its own political party, trade union, social services, cultural centres and mass media that could ensure the mobilisation of its members, several *pillars* arose in the flat landscape of the Netherlands, based on highly diverse value systems. They were in many ways autonomous structures which nevertheless succeeded to support the common roof of the Dutch state for a long period of time (Lijphart 1968).

The government, since 1888 a varying coalition between the ruling élites of two or more pillars, became responsible for subsidising private initiatives in many areas. The permanent need to keep the fragile peace led to a mutual penetration of state and society and to an elaborate art of finding political compromises by offering every pillar a share of the educational, social and cultural space. By financing subcultures, the state institutionalised particularism and, in doing so, produced an early form of present-day communitarianism; even the discussions on the pros and cons sound familiar today.

There are scholars who regard pillarisation as a fight for emancipation. A great many Catholics and Calvinists had remained in a inferior position until well into the nineteenth century. A 'demand for recognition' gave rise to a politics of difference (Taylor 1994, 38). The denominational school became for the Catholic and Calvinist leaders the ideal way to improve the status of their flock. In this view, a pillar forms a *lifeworld* full of values and meaning. It functions as a greenhouse which offers the weak enough protection to gain strength for life in the grim world outside.

This proposition has been attacked by those who argue that pillarisation was less a question of emancipation and more of *ghettoisation*. It was, in their view, the result of a policy to insert the Catholic and Calvinist workers in their respective structures in order to keep them away from Socialist sympathies. This view has found support in the fact that in 1954 the Catholic hierarchy, afraid that its flock would go astray, issued an episcopal mandate forbidding Catholics to join the Socialist trade union, read a Socialist newspaper or listen to Socialist broadcasts (Ellemers 1981, 114-115).

Whatever the case may be, the system of pillarisation not only brought about an explosive growth in the field of education, but also changed its character. Every social group of any significance demanded the right to financial support and the state was merely expected to distribute subsidies on the basis of objective standards. An obvious criterion was the degree of expertise within the respective pillars which would ensure that the money was not wasted. The educational sciences (*pedagogy* in the case of children and *andragogy* with regard to adults) were seen as vehicles to train the required professionals who were to work in the public or private institutions (Van Gent 1992, 250).

At the end of the 1960s, processes of professionalisation, secularisation and individualisation which were greatly stimulated by considerable economic growth, succeeded in undermining the pillars. As it turned out, the episcopal mandate of 1954 had been an early sign of Catholic desertion.

The post-war expansion of university education and higher vocational training had produced a large body of young intellectuals who, at first, went to work within the pillarised system. Journalists, social workers and educators began to replace politicians, priests and ministers (Ellemers 1981, 119). Within the established organisations, serious tensions arose between the largely volunteer management committees and the paid workers who wished to pursue their own goals on the basis of their professional aspirations and who were no longer willing to defend the traditional ideologies of their superiors.

Alongside the established voluntary associations which had achieved great power, more informal organisations such as 'alternative institutions', critical action groups and 'new social movements' emerged. Young people provocatively disturbed the political, social and cultural climate which had already been deeply influenced by continuing secularisation, a progressive demand for more participation and individualisation, and radical changes in behavioural norms.

In this context, the arrival of television was to play a major role. Until then, the mass media which were propagating denominational or ideological points of view, could be considered as 'the cement of the pillar'. Since television was at the beginning only available via one channel, Dutch viewers were more or less forced to look into each other's windows. As a result, a process of gradual *de-pillarisation* took place, but soon the advocates of the pillars were to make an unexpected comeback.

The prosperity of the sixties and the final stages of decolonisation brought many immigrants to the Netherlands, where a large number of jobs were available for the unskilled. The international oil crisis of the Seventies, however, caused depression and unemployment; the ill-trained immigrant workers were the first to suffer. When the Dutch government granted them the right to be reunited with their families, Holland turned into a problematic, multicultural, society. The provision of education for children and adults from the ethnic minorities became a major political issue. As a result, a discussion is taking place on the reintroduction of pillarisation as a strategy for multicultural education.

The continuing debate on Canadian multiculturalism

In 1971, the Canadian House of Commons adopted a policy of multiculturalism. All kinds of minorities were to be encouraged to maintain or develop themselves as distinctive entities within the bilingual context of English and French; at the same time, the need of mutual acceptance was stressed. The government promised to assist members of the different ethnic groups to participate fully in Canadian society. In order to reach that objective, immigrants were to be given the necessary means to learn at least one of the two official languages.

Ten years later, multiculturalism was added to the Canadian Constitution. In 1988, a Multicultural Act was passed and a Department of Multiculturalism and Citizenship was created. All these innovations, of course, reinforced the official commitment to pluralism in which 'ethnic, racial, religious and linguistic similarities and differences are valued and respected' (McLeod and Temelini 1992, 1).

The Canadian policy of a multicultural *mosaic* is often seen in sharp contrast to the traditional attitude towards immigrants in the United States where, from early on, individuals of all nations were 'melted into a new race of men'. This *melting pot* was not intended to preserve old habits, but to forge a new American culture (Schlesinger 1992, 12-13).

A similar strategy of integration has, in effect, also prevailed in Canada for a long time. American and European immigrants were invited to come, while others were clearly discouraged. Moreover, during the 1940s many in English-speaking Canada were still convinced that the French-speaking citizens would eventually be incorporated into one, English-speaking, nation (Thomas 1993, 2).

The adoption of the first Canadian Bill of Rights in 1960 can be seen as a major turning point with regard to immigration policy. Discrimination on the grounds of race, national origin, colour, religion, value system or sex was prohibited. A new approach to immigration included humanitarian and social goals such as reunification of families and admission of refugees. In 1986, of Canada's total population of 25 million, 34 percent listed British-only origins, 24 percent French-only origins, while 25 percent listed origins that were neither British nor French. In consequence, there is no longer a single ethnic majority in Canada. From a linguistic point of view, however, the English language still dominates Canadian society. By mother tongue spoken in the home, English claims 66 percent and French 23 percent (Weiner 1992, 4-5).

Because education is a matter for the provinces, confusing differences can be seen among them. A denominational system, for example, operates in Newfoundland, providing Anglican, Pentecostal, United Church and Catholic schools with governmental support, while no such legal opportunities exist in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island. Quebec, Alberta and Saskatchewan offer publicly funded separate school systems for English and French, while British Columbia has never made such a provision (Moodley 1992, 36). As a result, no single model of multicultural education exists in Canada.

The policy of multiculturalism does not seem to be embraced by a majority of Canadians. A poll conducted by Decima Research in December 1993 indicated that 72 percent of the respondents believed that the image of Canada as a nation of ethnic and racial communities, preserving their identity and values with governmental help, should give way to the American policy of cultural absorption; a major newspaper concluded that 'Canadians want mosaic to melt' (Bissooondath 1994, 1). At the same time, the promotion of multiculturalism has given rise to serious differences of opinion among politicians and social scientists. Although its practical problems are enormous, multiculturalism is still seen by many as a courageous policy aiming at social equality and tolerance. Others, however, fear the potential divisiveness of pluralism or even accuse it of reinforcing the hegemony of the cultural establishment: the maintenance of ethnic boundaries could easily result in the conservation of existing patterns of dominance.

Some argue that the ideology of multiculturalism was propagated in order to diminish the tensions between the anglophone and francophone communities by stressing the importance of other cultural groups. Levesque, former premier of Quebec and leader of the separatist movement, for example, denounced multiculturalism as a trick to divert attention from the debate over the special status for his province. Multiculturalism has also been accused of turning ethnic cultures into simplified folklore, the so-called mosaic as a Canadian version of American Disneyland. According to this view, the glorification of collective identity has concerned itself much more with *life styles* than with *life chances* and eventually runs the risk of replacing one kind of tyranny with another (Bissoondath 1994, 82; Adam 1992, 18; Appiah 1994, 163).

Others consider multiculturalism as a practical alternative to an assimilation policy that could not be pursued when a vast number of immigrants arrived over a relatively short period of time. They often refer to the United States where, in spite of the melting-pot ideology, Spanish is rapidly becoming the second main language (Warme, Malus and Lundy 1994, 222-223).

Protagonists mention several positive aspects. The feeling of belonging to a specific group may have many psychological advantages. Socialisation to the values of a community of one's own allows individuals to feel secure and helps to overcome barriers for education, since the contact with significant others is found to be essential for learning (Taylor 1994, 32). Nevertheless, those in favour of pluralism in the field of education also see some negative developments. At first, services provided for immigrants by volunteers both from their own ethnic group and from the host country allowed a great amount of flexibility for learning. According to Thomas (1991, 73), however,

> Canadian policies of multiculturalism have been transferred to some extent from the Learning to the Educational Domain, first through language classes provided in the evenings for adults and subsequently through the introduction of 'heritage language programmes' for children in the formal system.

Education between collective adjustment and individual emancipation

In the Netherlands, a new Christian-Democratic party, resulting from a merger between the crumbling Catholic and Protestant formations, succeeded in retaining the political centre for a certain period of time. Many of their voluntary organisations managed to survive in the middle ground between the state and the individual. In August 1995, the Netherlands counted nearly 3,000 public primary schools and around 5,000 private ones, mainly Catholic and Protestant.

In these Christian-Democratic circles, a plea for *re-pillarisation* is being been heard. One of their main ideologues, the sociologist Zijderveld, claimed that pillarisation had not disappeared completely from the societal stage. He pointed to education, health care and the mass media as essential sectors that are still pillarised (Zijderveld 1991, 8). The same strategy that had been useful for the emancipation of Catholics and Calvinists in the past, could now promote the emancipation of the different ethnic groups. At first, separate ethnic pillars would enhance the political and social influence of these immigrants. It is then to be expected that the next generations

> will modernise through education, emancipation and integration, and that their ideology will secularise, just as it has happened to the denominational pillars of the Christians (Zijderveld 1991, 8).

Conversely, the Liberals, who were never fond of pillarisation, favour cultural integration of the ethnic communities without any detour. Their parliamentary leader, Bolkestein, has asked immigrants who seek permanent residency in the Netherlands, to accept such principles as separation of state and church, freedom of expression and individual rights; 'if everyone's cultural identity is allowed to remain intact, integration will suffer' (Bolkestein 1991, 9). Some even believe that new ethnic pillars could eventually become fifth columns, attacking from the inside the Dutch value system.

It is obvious that the discussion on pillarisation and its consequences for education, among other things, is still going on in the Netherlands. For some, re-pillarisation is a promising phoenix; for others, it is an outmoded and even dangerous device.

In many ways, Canadian multiculturalism cannot be compared with Dutch pillarisation. The respective historical, political, social and cultural contexts are highly different. Holland is unilingual, Canada officially bilingual, while a great many native people and immigrants continue to speak their own original language. In the Netherlands, a sense of national identity is often taken for granted, while the search for a Canadian identity seems to be an unending quest. The four main Dutch pillars are denominational or ideological, Canadian multiculturalism has a predominantly ethnic orientation. Pillarisation developed partly unplanned, while multiculturalism was mainly an intentional policy.

One can argue that the Canadian state rests on two pillars, one English, the other French, that, unlike the Dutch configuration, are separated by geography (Thomas 1993, 2). However, in the light of the Quebec referendum of October 1995, which was won by the opponents of separation with an extremely slight margin of less than 54,000 votes, it is becoming quite uncertain if these two pillars are still able to support the Canadian state. Moreover, the native people of the First Nations are gradually forming a third pillar which further complicates the political situation.

From an educational perspective, at least one issue seems to be of primary importance in the debate over pillarisation and multiculturalism. Does a pillar provide for a relatively safe environment for learning which could promote individual emancipation or is it a form of collective adjustment which leads to ghettoisation because it keeps minorities outside the real centre of society?

Dutch developments seem to suggest that pillarisation is perhaps a self-exploding device. The pillar became a stronghold which transformed its constituency into a considerable political force. As such, it gave its members a new sense of identity, recognition and self-respect. In other words, it produced — as a kind of positive greenhouse-effect — a sense of community that was favourable to learning. After a certain period, this protection was no longer needed. The Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands, for example, has been the victim of its own success. Research, done in 1963, concluded that Catholics regarded themselves as 'having become adults, no longer needing the tutelage of the Mother Church'. Two years later, the episcopal mandate of 1954 was officially revoked (Kennedy 1995, 95).

Of course, the top of the different pillars did not really seek their final breakdown, but when Dutch society changed because of external factors such as economic growth and the rise of television, these leaders could no longer contain the emancipatory forces which they had, perhaps *nolens volens*, created themselves. In a comparable manner, the Liberal ideology, with its emphasis on the values of individual freedom and expanding suffrage, had at the end of the nineteenth century opened the gates for its political counterparts. More recently, the diverse black, coloured and Indian communities in South Africa, oppressed by one of the most extreme kinds of pillarisation and multiculturalism in the form of apartheid, were able to turn to their own educated leadership for help on the road towards further emancipation.

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Crossing borders: an alternative conception of competence and implications of professional practice in the workplace

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Within the industrialised societies, which have had a large expansion of formal education, there has increasingly been an emphasis on learning in working life. At the same time as there is a general need for learning, there is also a requirement for more learning in close relation to work.

A number of new forces, for example, changes related to the nature of work; demographic; technological; and global, are impacting on workplaces. The nature of workplace change will necessitate the training and re-education of much of the workforce in the next decade. The curriculum of this decade must provide the graduate with the tools to function in a truly global economy — in all academic disciplines. It must also be adjusted to reflect the transition of workers to knowledge-based workers. Approaches to competency based training which facilitate learning in an environment of change therefore become paramount.

This development is generally understood as a consequence of a society experiencing both increasing complexity and rapid change which has impacted on working life. Hence, such changes have resulted in the need to learn new skills and update old ones, i.e. an increased focus on the acquisition of competence or competencies.

In Australia and the United Kindom, competency based training, as a crucial part of national training reform agendas has been implemented. Both systems appear to have been based on the behaviouristic approach to competence, with little thought given to other more holistic approaches. Although research attempts are being made to explore more holistic conceptions of competence (for example, Hager 1994, Sandberg 1994, Gerber and Velde 1996; Velde 1997), these appear in the main not to be applied to actual practice. It is also important to remember that the behaviouristic approach may be of relevance to specific learning situations, for example, success has been experienced in using this approach with the education and training of persons with disabilities.

This paper explores the nature, character and meaning of competence, and proposes an alternative, holistic approach to competence which is more suited to workplace change, and to theoretical knowledge about the learning process.

The competency debate

Origin

The idea of competency based training and assessment appears to have originated in performance-based teacher education in America in the 1960s (Hyland 1995). Hobart and Harris (cited in Harris, Guthrie, Hobart and Lundberg 1995) played a leading role in the early development of such approaches in Australia, during the early 1980s. Subsequently, the Australian National Training Framework was implemented to increase Australia's competitiveness in the market-place. This Framework was shaped and driven by a series of major reports (Deveson 1990; Finn 1991; Carmichael 1992; Mayer 1992), and two earlier papers (Dawkins and Holding 1987, Dawkins 1989). The Australian Government White Paper on employment and growth, *Working Nation* (Keating 1994) extended and strengthened the impetus of the National Training Framework by highlighting the importance of skills and innovation as a key to Australia's future, both nationally and internationally.

Competency based training models have been adopted and practised widely throughout the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, United States and New Zealand; although such models differ between countries and also the degree to which they are practised. However, Australia and the United Kingdom possess many similarities both in the method of implementation and the behaviouristic stance adopted towards competency based training.

It is appropriate to consider further, why the behavioural model rather than any others has been adopted both in Australia and the United Kingdom? The reasons appear to be more policy related in both countries, that is, it is its appropriateness of policy, rather than its intrinsic viability which has sustained it. Essentially, the problem is that it is precisely those features that constitute its virtues from a policy point of view (the clear and simple operationalisation of disaggregated 'skills' and measurable standards of peformance) that condemn it theoretically and methodologically (Jones and Moore 1995, 81). Therefore, any attempt to strengthen the model by moving in a more holistic or relational direction will disable it as a policy instrument.

Thus, competency based training has arisen to a significant degree, from economic and social forces within society. Educational decisions which have been guided rather more by economic forces than educational ones, (referred to as 'economic rationalism') have led to the social reconstruction of the workforce.

The context of competence

Along with a focus on competence, there have been compelling arguments why skilling of workers is best done 'on the job'. For example, Billett (1993, 4) argued that 'informal learning settings, such as workplaces may provide an optimal place for the acquisition of robust and transferable skills'.

Alternatively, van Onna (1992) stated that informal learning on the job cannot be viewed as separate from formally provided education and training, and advocated a dual learning strategy which involves both. The workplace may be the most appropriate place for acquiring specific competence, for example, it is not feasible to simulate large integrated technological systems. Hence, the acquisition of specific competencies depends on contexts which are authentic (van Onna 1992). There is a dearth of research literature on the effects of learning on the job (van Onna 1992; Billett 1992; 1993).

It appears that whilst the characteristics of competency based programmes are understood, questions of meaning and interpretation with regard to competence, differ to the extent that they are almost polarised between the more behaviouristic and holistic approaches. Because of the increased focus on learning-on-the job and the implications this has for successful skill acquisition, there is an urgent need to suggest an alternative to the behaviouristic approach to competence. This is because such a view which typically perceives competence in terms of attributes, not only tends to produce narrow technical skills, but also ignores the worker's meaningful experience of practice (Dall'Alba and Sandberg, in press).

The meaning of competence

Although traditionally, competence has been perceived in terms of individual attributes or a discrete set of tasks to be performed (Dall'Alba and Sandberg in press), there remains considerable confusion as to what competence actually is, that is, whether it is a personal attribute, an act, or an outcome of behaviour (Ashworth and Saxton 1990).

These questions of meaning and definition are neither trivial, nor purely academic, because how can any training system be successful when there is such confusion and disagreement about basic terms and conceptions which are at the heart and foundation of the whole design and process? Surely the adopted meaning of competence impacts on the learning process and its outcomes in the workplace? Questions of status and value are also inextricably bound up with those associated with meaning and application.

Arguments against the behaviouristic approach to competence

Much debate about competency based training has occurred in both the Australian and overseas literature, for example, in Australia, Harris, *et al* (1995) comment that competency based training has the propensity to polarise. Winning (1993) writes that competency based training is often the focus of critics who suggest that it is generally narrow in focus with emphasis on specific, predefined skills. Thomson (1990, 179), too, raises the concern of narrowness: 'There may be a danger in narrowing the training to teaching/assessing technical competencies only. Other skills such as communications, group techniques, and problem-solving are important workplace skills'.

A narrow focus would seem to prevent people from achieving beyond predetermined guidelines, and thus not achieve their full potential. Collins (1991, 6) is scathing in his description of all competency based training strategies being instances of a 'narrow technicist approach to education which defines knowledge in the light of bureaucratic and corporate needs; such strategies, resulting in 'technocratic formulations and reductionistic competence-statements', have served to de-skill the educator's role and marginalise the vocational commitment of professionals'. We therefore need to strongly question the adoption of the behaviouristic approach to competency based training, and not just take it for granted.

Stewart and Hamlin (1995) criticise 'functionalism' (which they explain is based on behaviourism), because of its limited and rigid focus on the task functions of the job, to the exclusion of the worker. Hyland (1995, 50) argues that such an approach is 'utterly inappropriate for programmes of preparation and development in teaching and other professional spheres ...' This is because it is easier to apply a competency based training model to low level highly specific occupations, but much more difficult to apply the same framework to highly generalised professional occupations, such as teaching, or complex occupations such as management. For example, the latter require such abilities as entrepreneurship and strategic thinking, and hidden competencies such as organisational sensitivity (Stewart and Hamlin 1992). Pennington (1995, 6) criticises competency-based training because it entrenches the status quo; is not future oriented; and does not foster creativity and originality — which are important future abilities, as he aptly states:

> It is absurd to imagine that the distinguishing features of a brilliantly inventive research scientist, poet or artist in terms of educational outcomes can be observed predicably, in a measurable fashion.

Jones and Moore (1995) criticise the behaviouristic approach to competence because it is inadequate in its representation of work and social practices, that is, fails to accommodate the fact that any job is located within a complex set of organisational relationships; does not account for relations such as super and subordination, gender, age and ethnicity, fails to consider the location of a particular job within the organisational hierarchy, and is insensitive to organisational culture and the complexity of the 'world of work' as a system of social relations. Jones and Moore (1995, 90) argue that:

> The competency method, by reducing the social practices of work to itemised lists of the behaviours ... simplifies both the nature of the

> organisations and the nature ofthe competence that people employ within them and their relationship with other spheres of social life

Approaches to competence

The concern for competence has been an expression of a need for a more holistic concept including the characteristics of several other concepts, especially knowledge, skill and attitude. Stewart and Hamlin (1992) assert that the meaning of competence has not been sufficiently operationalised to form a useful basis for either development or assessment. Herein then, lies a major theoretical and practical weakness.

Gonczi (1994) distinguishes between three basic conceptions of the nature of competence: the behaviourist, the generic and the holistic.

> ...competence [the behaviouristic view] is conceived of in terms of the discrete behaviours associated with the completion of atomised tasks...This approach is not concerned with the connections between the tasks and ignores the possibility that the coming together of tasks could lead to their transformation (The whole is not greater than the sum of the parts). Evidence for the possession of the competency...is based on direct observation of performance.

This way of thinking about competence which treats it as an entity in itself has been prevailing both among researchers and practitioners. Stewart and Hamlin (1992) comment that where the competency based training model fails is in the limited breadth of analysis; and the too detailed depth of analysis. Gonczi (1994) adds that clearly this approach is inappropriate for both conceptualising professional work, and expressed serious doubts about its relevance to work at any level. Gonczi's (1994, 29) second set of approaches can be termed '*generic*'.

> ... Such an approach concentrates on the underlying attributes, e.g. knowledge or critical thinking capacity, which provide the basis for transferable or more specific attributes. ... In this model, competencies are thought of as general attributes, ignoring the context in which they might be applied.

Such an approach has been adopted in the management literature. Major criticisms of the 'generic' approach include: lack of evidence that such 'generic' competencies exist; doubts about the viability of 'transferability'; the decontextualising of competence; and its abstraction from concrete situations in which skills are actually performed (Gonczi 1994).

However, some more recent attempts have been made to combine the two approaches to create more holistic and integrated descriptions in the form of combinations of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This is because 'many skills are integrated and holistic, rather than separate and incremental. There may be a synergic effect with the whole outcome being greater than the sum of parts' (Tovey 1993). Hager (1994, 10) describes an integrated approach to competency based training and assessment as:

> ... competence is conceptualised in terms of knowledge, abilities, skills and attitudes displayed in the context of a carefully chosen set of realistic professional tasks (intentional actions) which are an appropriate level of generality.

Gonczi (1994) adds that this notion of competence is relational, because it brings together the abilities of individuals, and the tasks that need to be performed in particular situations. Jones and Moore (1995, 81) use the term 'relational' to 'indicate the broader theoretical way in which it attemps to locate competence within contextually located sets of social relations and their cultures of practice ...'

Jones and Moore (1995, 88) recommend a 'relational' model which acknowledges 'that competence is tacit, informally acquired, culturally embedded and contextually located in practice'. They add that '... competence is that which makes holism holistic — the whole that is greater than the sum of the parts'. Further, that a relational view of competence acknowledges its essential cultural characteristics and identifies it with social practice. It is fundamentally different from one which attempts to represent competence in a technical system of prescribed behaviours. The relational model described by Jones and More (1995, 88) consists of four main features:

1. Competence is the relationship between the inner (the person) and the outer (the social).
2. The locus of the transmission, acquisition and realisation of competence is within the informal practice of working life.
3. The locus of competence relates to the tacit nature of its transmission, acquisition and realisation.
4. The centrality of context is implicit to the definition, acquisition and realisation of competence, because it is only ever expressed through contextually defined social practice, and is relative to the tacit rules and expectations of context.

Sandberg's (1994) intentional view of competence represents a new way of looking at competence. This author extends Hager's (1994) integrated conception of competence by arguing for the inclusion of the intentional dimension of competence, that is, the individual's dynamic conception of the work, and his/her relationship to it. Phenomenographical approaches have been used to uncover intentional dimensions of learners by studying their conceptions of the world around them (Sandberg 1994). Such a perspective of competence does not appear to be well researched in the literature.

From a phenomenological viewpoint, human beings only have access to their reality through the *intentional character* of consciousness, and as such it is always directed towards something other than itself. As Sandberg (1994, 54) explains — 'the intentional character ... is not only the basic condition for our access to reality, but also for how meaning can appear without our lived experience of reality'. Thus, '... each attribute used by the workers in accomplishing their work is based on a particular meaning which is intentionally constituted through their experience of the work' (Sandberg 1994, 55).

The interpretative approach to human competence reacts against the cognitive approaches which assert that workers' conception of work result from an inner representation of an external work. Instead, advocates of interpretative approaches argue that when workers conceive their work, they are *actively* involved in making sense of it (Sandberg 1994). 'Placing lived experience at the centre overcomes the most fundamental limitation of traditional approaches in which this experience is nullified' (Dall'Alba and Sandberg in press, 5).

Sandberg (1994) proposes a model of competence, based on Targama's (1986) model, which consists of the following pre-defined categories: *theoretical knowledge, practical knowledge, network of professional contacts, capacity to carry out the work, and conception of the work.* Subsequently, Sandberg (1994) abandoned Targama's (1986) model, claiming that competence is not constituted by a list of attributes separated from a list of work activities. Instead, competence is constituted through workers' conception of the work, and the attributes are an internal part of workers' conception of the work (Sandberg, 1994).

Using such an interpretative approach to human competence, Gerber and Velde (in press, 9) demonstrated in their Australian study of 52 administrators and clerical-administrative workers, that competence for clerical-administrative workers was a multi-faceted and holistic concept. These authors recommended a more enlightened and holistic view of competence which offered 'a powerful alternative to consider when seeking to clarify the nature of this key concept [competence] in workplace performance ...'. One needs also to aim for a fuller understanding of competence which is suited to times of change and uncertainty, and to understand the variations in competence.

The conception of compentence: a critical field for research and practice

Competency based training has been mostly implemented without sufficient debate, analysis and critique (Harris *et al*, 1995) in many forms, situations and countries. It has and is currently being perceived as one answer — some would argue the *right* answer, and some would argue the *wrong* answer — to the complexities and difficulties of reform in education and training.

The integration of an interpretative approach to competence which includes the individual's dynamic conception of the work, and his/her relationship to it, with a 'relational' model which acknowledges the embedding of competence in both context and work relationships has the capacity to enhance workplace learning and to enrich practice. The conception of competence that one holds and ultimately interprets into workplace practice is vital, because it can either limit learning through a focus on discrete tasks, or extend learning through a more holistic relational and interpretative approach. An interpretative-relational approach to the development of competence includes all elements of a workplace environment, that impact on learning, that is, the individual; the context; the different variations in competence; and workplace relationships. Such an approach is analogous to learning theory which now emphasises that '...in a situated approach to learning, the authenticity of activity and circumstances assists the development of knowledge and its transfer' (Billett 1995:21).

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Strengths and limitations of social learning as a key concept for adult and continuing education in reflexive modernity

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Various observers describe and comment on the dramatic social transformations that are taking place. They express the intuition that the societies we live in are crossing borders. We are moving from an industrial to a post-industrial society, from a Fordist to a post-Fordist society, from a modern to a post-modern society, or from a classically modern society to a risk society. Against this backdrop, theorists and practitioners of adult and continuing education develop new principles and practices. Adult education should contribute to the reinvention of civil society 'in defence of the lifeworld' (Welton 1995), or it should support creative processes enabling people to 'learn their way out' of the vicious circle caused by uncontrollable mechanisms that control our planet today (Finger 1995). Others are convinced that adult education should break through the barriers of its institutionalised forms and explore processes of adult learning in a variety of contexts (Kade 1993, Bélanger 1994). Still others relate the role of adult education to management activities and human resources development in enterprises (Marsick and Watkins 1990). Finally, there is an influential tendency among scholars, claiming that biographical reflexivity of adults should be supported, in a world in which life-courses become fragmented and disrupted (Alheit *et al.* 1995). Through these attempts to reconceptualise the discipline and field of adult and continuing education, we explore the concept of 'social learning'. This concept helps to cross the borders of institutional adult education and to address issues of social responsibility as well as to trace and understand self-organised learning processes of adults in a variety of contexts. It refers to a long tradition in adult and continuing education of experiential learning and critical reflectivity. In the first part of this paper, we will present a synthesis of the four main principles of social learning before concentrating on some of the shortcomings of these principles, adding some insights, and putting forward concepts such as aesthetic reflectivity, transformative power, the balance of expert and lay(wo)man commitment, and the balance of internal and external communication.

Principles of social learning

Following Beck (1992) and Giddens (1991) we characterise the society in which we live today as a risk-society. In this type of society uncertainty and unpredictability are common features. They are the result of the fundamentally reflexive character of the late-modern times in which we live. Beck refers to the times we live in with the notion of 'reflexive modernity'. This type of society is both the product of and the generator of various practices and concepts of learning which should enable people to cope with uncertainty and unpredictability and a loss of secure standards. One of these concepts is 'social learning' (Friedmann 1987; Milbrath 1989; Finger 1995, Röling 1995). Social learning has to do with the exploration of existing and new standards of learning of social responsibility among groups, organisations and communities in conditions which are new, unexpected, uncertain and hard to predict. It is aimed at the solution of unforeseen context problems and is characterised by an optimal use of the problem-solving potential of groups, institutions or communities. Social learning is action- and experience-oriented, it is critically reflective; it is based on the questioning of assumptions and taken-for-granted problem definitions; it is interactive and communicative, which means that the dialogue between the people involved is of foremost importance; it is also characterised by multi-actorship, as the solution of relatively complex issues presupposes the collaboration of a diversity of actors. Social learning also contributes to the exploration and redefinition of the social responsibility of the actors involved.

Social learning can be conceived of as a particular way of framing reality. We can understand the activities of a particular group, movement or organisation in terms of collective learning processes, which may help us to see these activities in a new light. For example, we interpreted the actions of environmentalist groups in the Netherlands as a process of social learning (van Rheede 1997). The various principles of social learning elucidated some of the strengths and shortcomings in the functioning of these groups. The interpretation also opened perspectives for actions to improve the quality of the internal and external communication, of organisation and of goal achievement. In another research project (Vandenabeele and Wildemeersch 1997) we looked at the local public debate among farmer's organisations and environmentalist groups in two different regions. The principles of social learning helped us to better understand the factors of success and failure related to the negotiations among these pressure groups. Finally, we reinterpreted in terms of social learning some of the findings of earlier research on third world movements in the Netherlands (Jansen and Loog 1988). This puts the practices of these organisations into a new light, discussed later. But first, we will present the main principles of social learning.

The first principle of social learning is its *action- and experience-directedness*. The practice of social learning implies that the individual or group that learns is not in the first place considered as a passive recipient of external influences, or an 'empty vessel' (Freire 1972), but rather as searching, meaning giving and actively operating upon the context, whereby context-elements are adapted to the felt needs. This process of action involves a process of productive reality-processing, which means that the learning individual or group 'appropriate reality' (Hurrelmann 1986). This learning concept is in contrast with learning concepts related to dominant educational practices. The growing attention for social learning processes in diverse contexts implies that alternative concepts of learning, such as informal and incidental learning are taken more and more seriously. In this respect, Kade's reference to Hurrelman's concept of 'reflexive appropriation' of reality is interesting. 'With respect to the process of reflexive appropriation, adult education may be described as the particular social space where processes of appropriation of reality take place in a condense way' (Hurrelmann 1986, 398, our translation). The moment of reflection is added to 'the appropriation of reality' or to 'the experience', which includes a transformation of reality. Many of these concepts can be reduced to the common denominator of experiential learning. Theories of experiential learning form an appropriate base to give insight into processes of social learning (Kolb 1984)to begin to analyse and interpret the current variants of experiential learning, such as action learning, problem-based learning. These are being developed mostly via groupwork activities and in which 'reflection-in-action' and 'reflection-on-action' (Schön 1983) are of central importance.

Second, social learning is a *critically reflexive activity* , related to the solution of problems which find their origin in the social context. One has to justify the choices made in order to solve these problems both in terms of efficacy and efficiency, and social responsibility. Today, social contexts are turbulent and irregular, not stable nor regular. The learning-from-irregularity model is more adequate than the learning-from-regularity model (Wildemeersch 1991). Learning-from-regularity is a linear learning process, characterised by single learning loops. Learning loops are actually feedback-loops (Argyris 1982). A single feedback loop implies a simple comparison of the attained results of an activity with the original objectives. If a divergence becomes manifest between goals and results, this means that the action scenario should be altered in view of obtaining better results. Processes of learning-from-regularity mostly occur in relatively stable contexts, with predictable outcomes. Stable contexts, such as bureaucracies, trigger processes of single loop learning among many individuals and groups involved. Yet, people who are used to functioning in such circumstances, are not well prepared to unexpected situations, nor to function in turbulent contexts. They cannot flexibly adapt to changes and continually tend towards routine-like actions. Their in-built single loop learning mechanism is failing, and have not learnt to question the goals, backgrounds and basic assumptions of their actions. Learning in the context of 'uncertainty, complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict' (Schön 1983), presupposes another in-built learning mechanism. It presupposes a second learning loop which involves, next to a simple comparison of goals and means, a questioning of the goals themselves. The question is raised whether the goals are appropriate in a given situation. If not, the action is given a completely new direction. Further, we suggest adding a third learning loop which refers to processes of learning for social responsibility. Issues of *social responsibility* are not really articulated in the theories emphasising critical reflection. These theories mostly focus on empirical considerations, thereby leaving out ethical and political considerations. In society today, these ethical and political considerations need more attention. As traditional norms, values and standards become obsolete, creative processes of social learning will be needed in order to reinvent the ethical and the political.

The third principle of social learning is the *dialogical* principle. Communication theory and group dynamics teach us what mechanisms stimulate or inhibit processes of critically-reflexive learning. Very inspiring here is the theory on model 1 and model 2 learning of Argyris and Schön (Argyris 1982). Both ways of learning relate to processes of informal learning in everyday contexts. The dominant learning pattern in these contexts is the so-called model 1 type. This form of action learning is characterised by efforts of actors to unilaterally control and defend the situation, the task, the others and themselves. There is little room for the questioning of underlying norms and values, such as the conviction that emotions and negative feelings need to be neglected and that one has to act rationally, which time and again leads to unilateral mechanisms of control. This leads to defensive group-processes, to self-concealing practices and to single loop learning loops with limited effectiveness. Communication experiments time and again confirm that this model 1 pattern is part of the 'everyday lifeworld' of a majority of the people. Yet, social learning - which means that the potentiality of a group is optimally used, implies that these communication-inhibiting mechanisms are eliminated. A way out is presented through model 2 type of learning which presents the opposite communication and interaction pattern. Unilateral control of the task, the context and the actors is substituted by multilateral control; the competitive norms are replaced by co-operative norms; the interaction climate is directed towards collaboration. All this leads to 'double loop learning' and to better results. Many people espouse this second model of interaction and communication. Yet, in their everyday practice, their 'theory-in-use' is governed by model 1. Processes of social learning thus presuppose that people are also reflexively concerned about their own implicit interaction and communication theories or their own 'theories-in-use'. In many cases, this is only possible with the help of appropriate interaction- and communication training.

The last principle of social learning is its *multi-actor orientation.* This is about learning that comes about in new and uncertain situations which are difficult to predict. It may be hard to decide which expertise is appropriate to solve the problems at hand. A quick linkage of a given problem to a particular expertise often is a signal that the problem has been investigated only superficially. Therefore it is important to consider processes of problem-posing and problem-solving continually from different angles. The multi-actor orientation of social learning is not only the result of the collaboration of experts. The underlying vision of social learning is that also non-experts, or non scientists can contribute to the processes of problem posing and problem solving. Röling (1995) argues that, in situations characterised by uncertainty of the outcomes, which at the same time are of great existential importance, science is a matter for all and hence, as many people as possible should be involved in the processes of problem posing and problem solving. This he calls the stimulation of the 'agency' of a certain aggregate. Agency then means 'the capacity to influence the context, based on a collective deployment of means and organisation' (Röling 1995, 8, our translation). Within the context of broad social aggregations, diverse linkages can be established on the basis of a network approach, which may enhance self-reflexivity of a community. Milbrath suggests in this perspective, a 'learning structure', or a model of a learning society, which should stimulate processes of social learning in contexts of governance (1989, 281). Such a structure establishes a 'self educating' or a 'learning community' which is of importance in times that will force us to take a distance from massive production and massive consumption patterns. Milbrath conceives of the Greek concept of 'paideia' as a central project for our society. 'Activities such as research, education, self discovery, artistic expression, participation in public discourse and public affairs, imagining, and choosing a better future, are non polluting, non-stultifying, and fulfilling. Unlimited numbers of people, not needed for other sorts of work can be absorbed in this central project' (Milbrath 1989, 94-95).

From 'critical reflectivity' to 'aesthetic reflectivity'

As mentioned, the concept of social learning is supposed to meet the uncertainty, ambivalence and unpredictability that are the hallmarks of the risk society. However, to fulfil this 'mission', the concept of social learning itself cannot but be situated in the context of reflexive modernity, and figure as another of its products. This implies that social learning should both conceptually and practically, reflect the dilemmas and tensions that are typical for life under conditions of reflexive modernity. To neglect its own *situatedness* dooms social learning to idealistic illusions about the learning of communality, or to instrumental approaches for problem-solving on the other. Only if uncertainty, ambivalence, unpredictability and social responsibility are taken aboard in the principles that govern processes of social learning, this concept can legitimate its significance for the challenges and problems of the risk society.

Each of the four principles are at the heart of the concept of social learning and should be critically questioned for their reflection of dilemmas that are inherent in contemporary social practices and ways of life.

From this perspective the principle of *critical reflexivity* is problematic; itt reinforces the unsettling outlook of modern life that one 'never can be sure' about the conventions and mental maps that direct one's life. In the era of reflexive modernity every aspect of human life can and will be permanently examined and revised, because of the reflexive application of new knowledge and information. Reflexivity does not contribute to a greater certitude and control in social and personal life, but actually 'subverts reason' by its unstabling effects on practical routines and established outlooks on the world (Giddens, 1990). The principle of critical reflexivity reflects this modern habit of examining conventions and outlooks in the light of their *rational* justification. Because it explicitly aims at the introduction of new information and the critical examination of unreflected assumptions, it contributes to the experience that such rationalisations are in need of permanent revision. However, by doing so, critical reflexivity figures as a medium that easily enhances feelings of 'emptiness' and 'being lost'. Its focus is the cognitive criticism of what is, but entails no guidelines for the affective need of identification and 'belonging'.

This one-sidedness of critical reflexivity should be met by equally reflecting another dimension of modern reflexivity in the concept of social learning: *aesthetic reflexivity*. This kind of reflexivity is expressed in the new social movements (Eder 1993) and in 'neo-tribalism' (Maffesoli 1995). Such an aesthetic reflexivity does not especially ask for rational justifications, but implies the 'reflexive creation and invention of the sort of symbol-systems that will give collective solidarity to movements' (Lash and Urry 1994,.50). When social learning aims at collective solutions for the problems in the social context of a group or community, it should also address the need for *common symbols and rituals* in the life of the actors that are involved. It is only by the reflexive and conscious creation of common points of reference for identification, that processes of social learning enable the ascription of shared meaning and significance to the collective practices that are at stake. Common concerns then are not much substantiated by the rational criticism of cherished routines and outlooks, but by the generation of common feelings, focused upon an affective and self-chosen adherence to signs and symbols that are collectively recognised and valued.

The reflexive character and the active creation of symbol systems that will enable affiliation and identification with the common practices that are involved, has consequences for the *action and experience-orientedness* of social learning as well. It implies that the temporary 'community' of the social learners cannot be looked upon as a taken for granted collective actor. The sharing of meaning has to be created out of a heterogeneity of selves and identities, that are represented in the group of actors involved. Therefore the dialectics between action and reflection is not to be restricted to the rational reflection upon common experiences in the search for collective solutions. Reflection should also direct attention to the particular *positions* that both enable and constrict the possibility, representation and legitimation of particular experiences to different actors (cf. Grossberg, 1996). For these differences not only give actors different possibilities of access to the definition of problems and solutions that should be tackled in their social context. Different horizons of experience, also create differences in possibilities and desires to participate in the transformation of places of social learning into appealing symbol systems, that enable one's identification with ongoing processes of collective action and learning.

Being aware of the significance of aesthetic reflexivity therefore shifts the action orientedness of social learning to the issue of *tranformative power*. It points to the possibilities for different actors to intervene and 'make things happen' in the social fields where social learning takes place. Action in this context includes the enabling of feelings that one 'belongs to' places of social learning; that is, the promotion of experiences that moving into such places 'does make a difference' to the sense of meaning and to the ways of affiliation that are expressed in the common practices and learning processes of the learning 'community'.

Differences in the availability of transformative power also have impact on the principle of *multi-actorship*. This principle presupposes that the complexity and uncertainty of the problems that are addressed in social learning, requires the input of different perspectives, and a close co-operation between *'experts' and 'laymen'*. It reflects the analysis of the risk society as a society in which no sharp line of division can be drawn between who is an expert and who is a layman (Giddens 1990), and where the institutionalised rationality of scientists and experts has become a source of problems itself, instead of an expedient to solve them (Beck 1992).

However, the multi-actorship principle should reflect another perspective on expertise as well, if it is to figure as an adequate reaction to the complexities of reflexive modernity. For the hold of experts on the life-world of the modern subject is at the same time becoming more all-encompassing and pervasive, as its truth-finding and problem-solving capacities are becoming more disputed. As Bauman remarks: 'modern society is a site of *mediated action*....in which few, if any daily and mundane tasks may be accomplished without the assistance of supra-individual - specialised - knowledge' (1991, 210). Independently of its practical and actual results, modern expertise is *self-reproducing*, by its capacity to transform complex problems into issues and ways of their solution, that fit into its own definition of rationality. The competencies of lay actors are only recognised and valued as far as they accept and express the discourse of expert rationality. Therefore the relationship between experts and laymen is not just distinguished by the sharing of different kinds of knowledge and outlooks. It also contains struggles over claims of competencies, and over justifications of which kinds of competency and rationality are considered significant for the problems involved.

This implies that processes of social learning should also direct attention to the issue of 'who has a right to speak and to be heard' in conversations between 'experts' and 'laymen'. The multi-actorship principle requires a transcending of the limits that the rational discourse of modern expertise imposes to the definition and solutions of problems. Social learning will only fulfil its promises if it also enables the articulation of the *moral, emotional and aesthetic* arguments and desires that are excluded from expert knowledge, but that are expressed in the concerns and engagements that 'lay-actors' envisage with respect to problems in their social context.

The desired co-operation between experts and laymen also shines a more differentiated light on the *dialogical* principle of social learning. For this makes the 'community' of social learners less bound to their local context, and the kind of knowledge that is produced is less context dependent, than often is assumed (for example, Friedman 1987). By implication experts represent the more abstract and global systems that govern the world of reflexive modernity, and introduce their 'laws' and 'prescriptions' into the local 'community' of social learners. Systems of social learning therefore do not restrict themselves to the knowledge and desires that are associated with a specific place or space, but in their very design imply the *confrontation and reconciliation of local autonomy with global interdependency*.

Accordingly, the dialogical processes that are part of social learning cannot exclusively focus on group-internal affairs. For while social learning may represent on the one hand *sub-political processes of self-organisation* that shape and rearrange society from below (cf. Beck 1994), on the other hand it cannot dispense with conversations and negotiations about facilities, standards and conditions that are *externally* provided. The temporal 'community' of social learners can not act in a *self-referential* way, but meets both externally imposed limits and opportunities, and ethical and epistemological issues with respect to the external impact and credibility of decisions and actions that it takes (cf. Zeelen en Veendrick 1997). Social learning therefore should not content itself with the promotion of internal communication. It should engage into the public debate and hence, has to combat impediments in the communication with the outerworld as well, if it really means to maximise the learning potential of the social learners.

The additional analysis of the principles of social learning has thus resulted into a concept that takes better into consideration elements of ambivalence and ambiguity. It has also conceptually established a relationship between learning taking place within a system (inner directedness) on the one hand, and learning taking place via the interaction between this system and the external world (outer directedness) on the other hand.

Adult education may justify its own contribution to processes of social learning if it succeeds in balancing between the described dilemmas that are inherent to those processes. By consciously reflecting and integrating such tensions in its interventions, it can supply a surplus-value to the 'spontaneous' and permanent processes of social learning that take place in the institutions and life-worlds of the 'learning society'.

The case of social learning in the third world movement

It is interesting to try and reinterpret the findings of research we were involved in some years ago, from the newly developed perspective of 'social learning'. We are convinced that this operation shines a new light upon the data collected at an earlier stage (Jansen and Loog 1988). This research focused on the educational practices coming about in the context of the Third World movement in the Netherlands (local and national third world committees, action groups, third world shops etc..). In most of the cases which we analysed, we observed conceptions and practices of education which reproduce fairly traditional, instrumental and mechanistic basic orientations. The overall idea is that education in the third world movement is an instrument aimed at diffusing a particular world view concerning the relationship between the first and the third world towards collaborators and citizens at the grassroots level. The acceptance of this message is then expected to lead to transformative action both on local and on more global levels. We can make that clear while referring to the four principles of social learning and their complements, developed above.

First there is the issue of *critical reflectivity*. Most of the spokes(wo)men of the third world movement emphasise the importance of this principle. Yet, they have a one-sided conception of it. They predominantly think of reflectivity in cognitivist terms. They do not articulate the emotional, moral and symbolic dimension of action and learning which definitely is present in the motivations of the participants. They lack the vocabulary to grasp these aesthetic aspects of reflectivity because they do not fit into their rationalistic conceptions of education and learning. The consequence is a disjunction between the agendas of the professionals in the movements and the people operating on the grassroots level.

A second observation relates to the principle of *action- and experience-orientedness*. In most of the cases the movements involved did not succeed in relating the discourse concerning the structural causes of injustice to concrete everyday action perspectives. A real negative consequence is that feelings of powerlessness tend to be reinforced, rather than successfully challenged. A powerful exception though is the practice of the third world shops that succeed in relating their fair trade actions on the grassroots level to issues of international trade relationships on a global scale. In these cases, the actors involved have the experience that they have the power to transform things be it on a concrete level, or that their actions 'make a difference'.

A third remark has to do with the importance of a *multi-actor perspective* when social learning is at stake. Most of the organisations involved are characterised by a fairly open, lose and informal organisational structure, which is also characterised by a heterogenous distribution of experiences, backgrounds, age and competencies. This heterogeneity is in many cases also valued as a positive aspect of the organisation. In this respect the movements potentially correspond to the principle of multi-perspectiveness. At the same time, it is rather striking that the dualism between professional experts and non-professional volunteers was becoming a considerable problem. Professionals began to take up an expert-role, thereby concentrating heavily on the technical aspects of their activities, and neglecting the process dimension of their task. This development contains the risk that the movement dynamics are being neglected in favour of the organisational dynamics. An additional problem is that the reservoir of competencies which is available in such a structure is not really addressed. The consequence then is that lay(wo)men are increasingly considered as deficient actors who have to be subjected to the expert models of the professionals. These observations show that the reinvention of expert-lay(wo)man relationship within these organisations is an important matter in view of processes of social learning.

A final observation relates to the *dialogical principle*. We have argued here that not only the internal communication should be object of reflection in a process of social learning, but that the commitment to a public debate is of equal importance. An important outcome of the process of social learning indeed is the competence to criticise and deconstruct dominant discourses concerning the issues at stake. This commitment to the public debate also includes that the third world movement, at various levels, learns how to get its own issues on to the agendas of power centres like trade unions, government, corporate businesses and the media. The research reveals that this is a difficult task, given the fact the differences between the narratives of these power centres and various third world organisations.

We are convinced that the concept of social learning helps to cross the borders limiting practices of the learning of adults in contexts other than the traditional institutions. Yet, at the same time, we think that this very concept is also valuable to break the boundaries of learning within familiar institutions of adult and continuing education. We have argued that these new orientations are necessary, especially in view of the transformations which currently take place in our society and which are deeply influencing concepts and practices of education and learning today.

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Prior learning assessment: a case study of acceptance of innovation and change

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This research investigated acceptance of innovation and change as it related to a specific educational change — prior learning assessment (PLA) at the University College of the Fraser Valley (UCFV) in British Columbia, Canada. Change theory suggests that acceptance of innovation and change is not distributed evenly throughout social systems and that individual adaptation of innovation is related both to individual characteristics as well as the nature of the innovation itself.

Several research questions were posed. What factors can be identified as critical for faculty acceptance of educational change? In particular, which factors are critical for the acceptance of the idea of prior learning? How is the acceptance of innovation related to the nature of the innovation itself? How can a model of diffusion of innovation explain the level of acceptance of PLA at UCFV?

Methodology and procedures

Cohen and Manion (1989) suggest using triangulation, the combining of two or more methods, to yield a complete understanding of a phenomenon. Combining qualitative and quantitative methods yields a greater understanding when the variables under study are complex (as was the case).

The quantitative method employed (survey) allowed for explorations of attitudes and values, on a large scale, towards prior learning assessment and innovation. Use of content analysis (review of policies and minutes), structured interviews, and case study methodologies provided an understanding of the degree of acceptance or resistance to change and the meaning of change to the individual — a phenomenological approach. Multiple methods of data collection and analysis assisted in the formulation of relationships between demographics, experience, and educational variables with attitudes towards prior learning and acceptance of change. Case study methodologies are particularly useful in understanding why some programmes and individuals are unusually successful or unsuccessful (Patton 1987).

The methodologies used combine themselves as a form of both action and applied research. As applied research, this project was concerned with establishing relationship and testing theory. In so far as the purpose of the research was to gain 'precise knowledge for a particular situation and purpose' (Cohen and Manion 1989, 218), it fits the parameters of applied research.

Procedures

A survey was designed, developed, and administered to all faculty and administration at UCFV. Given the difficulty of choosing a stratified sample (to ensure representation from all areas), the decision was made to involve all eligible faculty and staff (N=236). The response rate, after a reminder, was 50%.

As a result of analysis of the survey responses, a further sample of nine faculty and four administrators was chosen for indepth interviews. Of the four senior administrators, two had not responded to the survey and it was thought important to get their views. Faculty selected for the interviews were mostly departmental heads and were chosen from those areas where the response rates to the survey had been low, because the purpose of the interviews was to be able to develop further insights into barriers. Four students who had attempted PLA, successfully and unsuccessfully, were interviewed. Semi-structured schedules were used, and all interviews were taped and transcribed.

Discussion and findings

PLA is not well established. Faculty were generally unaware of PLA policy and methodologies. There was confusion between PLA as a concept and specific methods of granting PLA credit. PLA is neither well understood nor accepted at the department level. There are real barriers for students attempting to gain PLA credit at UCFV. PLA represents a major shift in both paradigm and process and requires that faculty make major changes in the way they conceptualise their roles and student learning.

Personal level of support for PLA was high, yet knowledge of PLA policy and methodology was low. Presumably this means support for the concept, but it is difficult to understand how this support is translated into practice without knowledge of PLA policies and methodologies.

Factors identified as critical for the acceptance of educational change

These factors identified as critical are (a) faculty must believe the change is in their best interests and change must not be seen to threaten faculty prequisites, status, or autonomy, (b) the change must be approved of at the disciplinary/departmental level, (c) the impetus for change should be seen to be coming from within the organisation, (d) individuals

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in positions of leadership need to set a positive climate for change, and (e) there needs to be acknowledgement of the nature and degree of paradigm shift necessary to accomplish the change.

It is not clear faculty uniformly view PLA as being in their best interests. Some of the resistance to PLA seems to centre around fear of loss of jobs. If students can learn outside the classroom, and credit can be granted for workplace based training and through non-formal means, then faculty may begin to see themselves as redundant. If the fear of redundancy is combined with the very real push by the federal and provincial governments to cut funding, then this fear is exacerbated.

Given the fact there is little compensation in the system for PLA at the individual faculty level, it is not surprising that faculty are somewhat resistant to PLA; if not ideologically, then by putting up barriers of suitability of methodology or concerns over time restraints. Most faculty saw themselves in favour of PLA (principle), but had concerns over either the applicability of PLA to their discipline or particular methodologies (practice).

There is some evidence faculty see PLA as somehow threatening either their jobs or their autonomy. This is consistent with the literature, which suggests that change will not be embraced if it threatens faculty perquisites, status, or autonomy. Even within supportive departments, there is still a wide variety of opinions about the suitability of various PLA methodologies and the suitability of a particular course for PLA credit. Without support and approval for change at the departmental level, PLA will not become entrenched within the system.

A necessary precursor for educational change is that the impetus needs to be seen as coming from within the organisation rather than from external forces. Faculty were quite consistent in seeing the impetus for PLA coming from students and 'grassroots', while senior management knew the impetus was governmental.

Literature on academic change suggests the impetus for change needs to be seen as internal rather than external. Much of the impetus for PLA was coming from government and quasi governmental bodies at both federal and provincial levels. However, most faculty saw the impetus behind PLA as internal. If faculty begin to realise the impetus for PLA is externally driven, it is unknown what will happen to even the marginal level of support PLA currently enjoys.

Innovations in product are more acceptable than innovations in process and those innovations requiring major paradigm shifts are more difficult to accomplish. PLA is a major shift in process, requiring acknowledgement that students learn outside the classroom and under their own motivation. It requires crucial shifts in faculty roles, from provider of learning opportunities to assessment and evaluation of learning acquired outside of the classroom. These are major paradigm shifts, difficult for most faculty to accommodate, and faculty were having difficulty in making these conceptual shifts. While faculty were supportive of PLA, for the most part, they also expressed profound reservations about the kinds of learning students may present for evaluation.

Factors critical for institutionalisation of PLA

Here there are a number of critical factors including: (a) faculty awareness that students can and do learn outside of classroom, (b) faculty knowledge of methods for assessment of prior knowledge, (c) faculty support for PLA and the role changes it entails, (d) clear specification of course and programme outcomes, and (e) full integration within the system.

Faculty awareness of PLA policy and methodology was low. The degree of confusion existing between PLA and portfolio assisted assessment was but one indicator of the low level of awareness. While faculty expressed reservations about particular methodologies or the suitability of particular disciplines for PLA, they had not taken steps to deal with their questions. Many respondents had used some form of PLA (transfer credit, block transfer of credit for another credential, self directed study, standardised exams, course challenges) in their previous educational experience. Thus, credit for prior learning, in its broadest interpretation, is not a new concept. However, faculty do not conceptualise all of these forms as prior learning. There was clearly a high degree of confusion over definitions of PLA and confusion between a methodology (portfolio assisted assessment) and a concept (prior learning assessment).

Given the level of confusion existing about PLA methodologies, it is not surprising there is a low level of PLA credit awarded. Faculty in courses with a highly theoretical base are suspicious any methods other than examination can assess learning. As well, they are concerned that adults who have learned through workplace or experiential forms of learning may not have acquired the appropriate theoretical base. Coexistent with this is the faculty belief that portfolio methods of assessment are suitable only in some areas and not others.

While there appears to be support for the concept of PLA, the questions and issues raised during the course of the project suggest the support is in principle rather than practice. Faculty express delight with the performance aspects of teaching and less enthusiasm about the 'backstage' areas — marking and preparation. If PLA takes away that which they love (performance) and relegates them to the area of evaluation, then they may become more resistant. Faculty expressed concerns about lack of time to get involved in PLA. Faculty already feel overwhelmed by the demands of the system and the increasing insecurity of the system. PLA is just one more demand they need to deal that they do not see as critical to their role. Thus, it tends to get pushed to the margins of their workload and concern.

A critical factor for academic change to occur is the perceived level of departmental (disciplinary) support. Without the support of the department, change will not occur. PLA is rarely, if ever, discussed at the departmental level. Many respondents were unable to even state what they thought the level of departmental support for PLA was in their discipline.

Student experience demonstrates that most have not had an easy time with PLA. Students generally anticipated there would be more credit available and the process would not be so cumbersome. For some, the portfolio development process was very onerous. Others realised their learning did not match specific course outcomes.

Relationship between characteristics of the innovation and its acceptance

These characteristics include the compatibility of the innovation with existing beliefs and practices; the degree to which the innovation is perceived as having a relative advantage for the adopter; and the degree of complexity of the innovation. PLA is not incompatible with existing beliefs in some ways. Faculty have experienced PLA in their own education, see themselves as being student driven, and want to respond to student needs. However, they also want to be in control of educational outcomes and see education as being more than the accumulation of credits. They are not sure how or what people learn outside of the classroom and they are not sure they can measure this in any acceptable way.

PLA is seen as advantageous by faculty as it meets student demand for accessibility and portability. However, some faculty see students who access PLA as being disadvantaged by it — they will have missed something that occurs in the classroom situation that cannot be duplicated elsewhere. They are concerned the system not be shortcut; education means more than the accumulation of credits.

PLA tends to be seen as more advantageous by some administrators and government who may see it as a way of getting more for less. Other administration and faculty saw PLA as advantageous because it accomplishes two goals: meeting the needs of adult learners and allocating scare seats.

Simple innovations generally are adopted more easily than those which are complex. PLA is a very complex innovation requiring fundamental shifts in process, which may explain why it has not been readily adopted. Confusion about process, confusion between PLA and portfolio assisted assessment, and confusion about policy and procedures for implementation, demonstrate the complexity of PLA as an innovation.

The UCFV findings are consistent with studies of PLA at other institutions. The confusion between prior learning assessment and portfolio assisted assessment appears to be endemic. Resistance to PLA because of fears that it will diminish the classroom role are also apparent in other studies. Resistance to PLA seems greater in those institutions and departments with greater academic prestige (that is, arts programmes). These fears seem to revolve around the perception (perhaps justified) that PLA may somehow lower the prestige of a credential.

Conclusions

An analysis of the status of implementation of PLA at UCFV and the attitudes and perceptions of faculty and administration suggest that four major conclusions can be drawn. First, while the principle of PLA may be acceptable to faculty, there is less support for PLA as a practice. Second, there are significant barriers for students attempting to achieve PLA credit at UCFV. Resistance on the part of faculty is often experienced as barriers by students. Third, PLA is just one component of educational reform and the acceptability of PLA will rest on how it is integrated with educational reform being instituted within the system. Fourth, Rogers' model of diffusion is helpful in explaining the level of acceptance of PLA at UCFV.

It can be concluded that while there is support, albeit marginal, for PLA as a principle, there is much less support for its practice. There is a high level of confusion over the PLA methodology of portfolio assisted assessment and the concept of prior learning assessment. There is a lack of clarity and consistency in how PLA is managed within the institution. While credit transfer mechanisms are clearly understood, challenge and portfolio assisted mechanisms are not.

Those who have adopted PLA have done so because it seems to fit with their existing beliefs and practices. PLA, for these faculty, mostly in the applied areas, seems to be an extension of what they have always done: recognise significant learning achieved outside the classroom. While faculty generally expressed positive views of PLA, there are only a limited number of PLA credits granted, whether through challenge or portfolio assisted methods.

While faculty may appear to support PLA in theory, they resist it in practice. What can be attributed to resistance on the part of faculty towards PLA is experienced as barriers by students. There are a number of concerns, expressed by faculty, which translate into barriers for students to access PLA, including grading, transcription, and payment to faculty assessors. The kind of credit (analogue or elective) to be granted to students accessing PLA is confusing to both students and faculty. Faculty are not sure how they would award elective credit and how they would make the decision on how much to award.

Faculty resistance to PLA is centred on the degree to which it is perceived as threatening typical (and highly valued) faculty roles. Even the proponents of PLA do not seem to be cognisant of the extent and nature of the paradigm shift required of faculty and the amount of resistance engendered by PLA. Even faculty supportive of PLA have concerns over its implementation and the role changes required.

Most faculty are not convinced students who acquire learning outside the classroom have the appropriate theoretical background provided in the classroom. Faculty tend to see classroom activities as being the core of learning and express reservations and doubt learners could accomplish this, even with rare exceptions, on their own or in workplace settings.

Faculty are uncomfortable assessing portfolios and unsure of how to grade this kind of learning. More used to assessing learning using multiple methods over a long time period, faculty express reservations about assessing learning through portfolio assisted assessment.

The barriers for students attempting PLA include restrictive and difficult to understand policies and procedures, lack of information about PLA, and the difficulty of matching prior learning with an existing course. Students who attempted PLA at UCFV reported that their expectations were that it would be easier than it was. It was presumed at the outset of PLA that there would be a plethora of applicants for credit. This groundswell never materialised. While PLA sounds good, the existing processes for granting credit are so cumbersome that learners decided, in some cases, it was easier to take the courses.

The final conclusion drawn is that Rogers' model of diffusion of innovation can explain the acceptance of PLA on both individual and organisational levels. There are relatively few faculty and administrators who could be considered innovators and early adopters. For the greatest number of faculty, those who have not yet adopted (the early and late majority according to Rogers), PLA will be adopted when it is seen to be both advantageous and beneficial and integrated within the system. Some faculty, primarily in the arts and science area, will probably never adopt.

Implications

Unless PLA is seen by faculty as an integral part of the way educational services are offered to students, PLA activities will continue to be marginalised. Until such time as faculty fears and issues are resolved, PLA will remain on the fringe of the institution.

The extent to which faculty believe the impetus for PLA is student driven will influence the degree to which they are willing and able to get involved in PLA. To integrate PLA within the institution, it may be necessary to minimise the role federal and provincial governments are taking in promoting PLA and concentrate on perceived student need and demand.

Given the extent to which PLA requires faculty to make major changes in the way they view students and learning (paradigm and process), PLA will not succeed unless faculty are offered 'carrots' to make these shifts. To the degree that PLA is seen as synonymous with the changes in funding patterns, it will be resisted. If PLA is to become integrated, methods will have to be found to separate the PLA issue from other funding issues and not have PLA be seen as one more way in which faculty can be required to do 'more for less'.

If PLA is to succeed within the institution, it has to be framed in concepts and language compatible with language used by faculty. Given the greater acceptability of PLA to applied faculty, it appears that PLA efforts should be concentrated in this area. It may be, with time and moderate success, other more resistant faculty who see the results of students who have completed pre-requisites through PLA, will be encouraged to integrate PLA. Given the degree of faculty resistance to educational reform, PLA needs to be seen as a minor, not major, part of the process of educational reform.

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Issues and experiences using participatory research to strengthen social capital in community development

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In the United States, rural Midwestern communities are encumbered with the same systemic challenges and cultural biases that many rural communities around the world endure. In addition to the seemingly inevitable decline in physical, financial, and human capital, these rural communities are all-too-often burdened by entrenched forces of cultural reproduction. Leadership seems to be an inherited right, where young leaders are identified by the position of their parents, grandparents, and great grandparents. Many young people who can leave usually do leave. Locally owned banks are bought and absorbed by regional and national holding companies. Low wages require an average family to maintain about 2.5 jobs per household just to meet basic needs.

To compound this problem, today's dominant paradigm in rural economic development is industrial recruitment, where rural communities compete and bid for outside investment with tax abatements, employee training programmes, and land give-aways. With dwindling state and federal money, less and less outside capital is available to subsidize these types of community development programmes. There is a growing body of research that suggests that tax abatements and other financial incentives are inherently problematic (LeRoy 1994, Ginsburg and Bluh 1994). The effort to attract footloose firms pits one rural community against another, where the 'successful' bidder is often the loser as firms which received public entitlements may pick up and leave just as the investment begins to pay dividends to the community.

Social capital and participatory research

Social capital in a community is defined as collective norms of reciprocity and mutual trust. Putnam (1993, 35-36) says social capital refers 'to features of social organisations, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit. Social capital enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital'. Coleman (1993, 9) says that such informal norms 'depend on a dense and relatively closed social structure that has continuity over time'. Thus, social capital thrives only when individuals within a social system interact with one another in multiple roles over a period of time. Only then can trust reach sufficient levels to allow for the reduction of transaction costs. Increased social capital can reduce transaction costs of using other forms of capital — physical, human, and environmental. Alternatively, as is suggested by Bourdieu (1977, 487), privileged groups can maintain their privileges through intergenerational transfer of social and cultural capital to their offspring, which may reduce the efficiency of other types of capital.

Thus, social capital refers to the structural relationship between different actors and organisations within community. The essence of social capital might be characterised at 'people' power in the positive sense, or as the 'old boys network' or other similar negative aphorism, when used to exclude certain categories of people. In either case, as a form of capital, it involves the use of social resources to generate other resources. For communities or groups with limited resources of other types capital, social capital as an asset is seen as a sustainable resource for development (C. Flora 1995, J. Flora *et al.* 1996).

Participatory research, within our framework, is an educational approach that strengthens social capital. Whereas professionally trained researchers, adult educators, and community developers, may have certain skills, talents, and insights which might be useful to a community, as 'outsiders' they cannot create sustainable change within a community. We argue that unless the community is a full partner in the research process, the resulting strategies and implementation will not be successful. In essence, we see this community development process beginning with an alternative system of knowledge production and understanding that can lead to self-development (Tandon 1988, Fals-Borda and Rahman 1991, *Participatory Research* 1982).

For our purposes, though, knowledge production is not enough. The knowledge that is created through participatory research must be utilised. Moreover, both the community and the participatory researcher need to be able to recognise and understand the impact of this utilisation. Although participatory research is appealing to the academic as a 'democratic' manifestation of knowledge production, our experience suggests that to the community member it is only useful when applied to developmental activities.

Building communities for tomorrow

The philosophical foundation of BCT is deeply rooted in community development, social capital, and participatory research theories. The origins of this programme date back to 1995 when Extension

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to Communities staff began to ask ourselves how effective we were, and what type of impact we were making. Upon closer inspection, we recognised that most of the programmes we offered to Iowans were short term, one evening to several months long, facilitation of organisational and community planning workshops, leadership institutes, and economic and community development programmes. Seldom did we work long enough on a project to measure impact or change in behaviour.

In 1993-1994, there were several new staff addition to Extension to Communities (including the authors). With new personnel came new ideas, skills, and experiences in participatory research and social capital. In 1995, we invited John Gaventa to Iowa to conduct a residential staff training on participatory research. It was shortly after his workshop that we began to develop BCT. When we initially began to develop and design BCT in 1995, there was an emphasis on developing social capital as the means to sustainable development. Unfortunately, the final printed material for BCT in 1996 de-emphasised the introduction of social capital in lieu of more mainstream community development language.

Bellevue, Iowa

Bellevue was selected through a competitive process to be Iowa's first BCT community. When we began looking for a pilot community to test our new programme, we looked for a community with indicators of strong social capital. As a first test of this new programme, we were not looking for a problem community but one that would have a high likelihood of success. The citizen's steering committee that first invited us to Bellevue was and is impressive. It is a relatively young cohort, 30-45 years old, with good gender balance, representing a cross-section of the community, and possessing a willingness to experiment and take on new challenges. As a group they are proactive and reasonably progressive.

Bellevue is a picturesque community of 2239 people along the banks of the Mississippi River in a farming valley surrounded by palisades and bluffs. Whereas twenty years ago this was primarily an agricultural community, it is now a bedroom community to Dubuque, Iowa. It has a small, and until quite recently a vibrant retail district that relies upon both local and tourist traffic. It is a historic Roman Catholic community with a small but important Protestant population. It is not only beautiful but in a romantic way an ideal locale to raise a family — safe, clean, and protected

Bellevue is also a community which is at a crossroads. Because of the surrounding bluffs, there is little land on which to build new housing or to expand its industrial base. Since the 1993 Mississippi River flood (which did not physically damage the town), tourist traffic has significantly diminished. In addition, as part of a national trend, more and more residents view shopping as a social activity and therefore prefer driving a half hour to Dubuque's malls and retail districts in contrast to supporting local businesses. As a result, many downtown businesses and restaurants are experiencing serious decreases in business, resulting in financial stress.

Developing community research

The Bellevue project began in January 1996. The first task of the steering committee was to identify and recruit a larger group (35-40 people) for the project. With the help of a worksheet developed by the National Civic League in Denver, Colorado, the steering committee identified existing leaders, new leaders, emerging leaders. They recruited people between the ages of 15 and 75 years of age. They sought out long-time residents, up to three generations, and new residents of less than a year. Traditional families, grandparents, single parents were recruited. People of different socio-economic classes were invited and joined, as well as rural residents and farmers along side the city residents. A sincere effort was made to invite a diverse cross-section of people to form the larger group. As a group, they agreed to participate once or twice a month for up to three years — a major commitment of time and energy. Later in one of their studies, it was revealed that some community leaders saw the Bellevue BCT committee as the most diverse in Bellevue's history.

From the beginning, we decided to emphasise the theoretical aspects of social capital and participatory research. After the first two or three meetings with a newly constituted and diverse citizens committee of thirty-five people, we discovered that most everyone understood the theory, and were able to discuss with each other specific aspects of it relative to the community. More than a year later, social capital language has become institutionalised within the group. This important experience underlines not only the importance and relevance of developing theory within a community setting, but also the relationship between theory, research, and practice.

The first evening the large group developed a 'community map'. They were asked to develop a schematic drawing which showed 'the Bellevue' they want to see in the near future. The map captured their feelings, intuitions, and experiences of both Bellevue today and a Bellevue for tomorrow. It relied upon drawings rather than words, and involved everyone first developing maps in small groups then, together, synthesising a whole group map. This exercise served as the first 'interpretation' of Bellevue. Although not scientific, the themes and issues that were identified that night have re-emerged in every subsequent study.

The group then decided they needed a larger community voice in developing an understanding of

Bellevue's issues and opportunities. Working together, a simple survey was developed around one stimulus question: 'What do you like about Bellevue and what would you like to change?' The large group divided itself into several subgroups based on peer relationships, for example, teenagers, seniors, retailers, commuters, farmers, and professionals. Using this stimulus question, each peer group went into the community and interviewed people who were similar to their peer group, and people who were most dissimilar to their peer group. For example, the seniors interviewed other seniors and teenagers. The results of this activity showed that there were some difference in perspectives based upon age and peer groups. This exercise also revealed a potential problem within the retail community; the retailers were very reluctant to interview their peers, fearing that the intent of their question might be misinterpreted as a scheme to gain some 'competitive advantage' or that the survey itself would be viewed as a criticism of the community. Their solution was to ask a third party — perceived as being more neutral — to conduct the interviews on their behalf.

The Bellevue BCT committee then invited a graduate sociology class from ISU to develop a leadership study. Jan Flora and some of his students had recently developed an in-depth interview instrument and tested it in Vandalia, Missouri, and Aurora, Nebraska, two rural Midwestern towns with similar populations to Bellevue. Because of some of the sensitive questions in the interview, the committee decided to invite Flora's rural sociology students to conduct the interviews in an effort to get more honest responses. The Bellevue BCT committee began the research process by identifying the first group of eight community leaders for the graduate students to interview. In each interview, which generally lasted an hour or more, four final questions were asked: (1) Whose support do you need to make a project successful? (2) who can stop a project? (3) who are the best project implementors? and (4) who are the most effective representatives of Bellevue to the outside? People identified by these questions were then interviewed. The interview process went on for five days — for a total of 31 interviews — until everyone who was identified by multiple respondents in these questions had been interviewed. Once the same names kept showing up in the interviews, the leadership interviews were completed.

The leadership study was profound. Although there are many civic and church organisations in Bellevue, there is a cohort of about 25 people who comprise the inner circle of all these organisations. Even though the leadership is generally young by rural Midwestern standards, between 30-50 years old, many of these leaders are second and third generation leaders. An unexpected outcome of this survey showed that the Bellevue BCT committee is probably the most diverse committee in the community's history. Also, the data indicates that many of the younger leaders want to open up and share leadership responsibilities with others in the community. These young leaders clearly are not conspiring to maintain power. Rather, they have inherited power in seemingly innocuous ways that are difficult to identify and understand. Through this map, we are beginning to understand some of the aspects of cultural reproduction in community leadership.

In early 1997, a retail trade analysis for Bellevue was developed by ISU's Economics Department. This analysis was based on sales-tax receipts. It showed that there is tremendous retail trade leakage to the surrounding urban communities of Dubuque and Davenport, Iowa. The results of this research were not very encouraging, yet very consistent with almost every other Iowa community of similar size to Bellevue. It also showed that in order for Bellevue's small retail community to remain viable it would have to focus on developing its assets — location on the Mississippi, tourism potential, quality of life, and quality service — and serve a niche that fits the character of the community. One positive outcome of this retail trade analysis occurred at the large public meeting at which the data was presented to the community. Representatives from the city council, the local economic development agency, and the chamber of commerce recognised that they would have to work closer together in order to develop successful strategies.

The next research project initiated by Bellevue's BCT committee was to commission the ISU's Community Development-Data Information and Analysis Laboratory to conduct a survey that measures local assessment of community services, attachments, spirit, participation, and quality of life. This particular instrument was developed in 1993, and randomly administered to one community in each of Iowa's 99 counties between 1994 and 1995. A composite community called Sigma developed from this state-wide survey will be compared with Bellevue. The results of this survey will be available by May 15, 1997. Of all the research conducted by the group to date, this will be the most traditional. Yet, the ownership of this information, and ultimate interpretation, will reside with Bellevue's BCT committee.

Even though several more research projects are planned for the fall 1997, the BCT committee has been moving to develop action plans via subcommittees in retail trade and tourism. As a group, they realise that an investment needs to be made in both tourism and retail trade in order to keep the town viable. These two primary areas of concern were identified the first night in the community mapping activity. There has been consistent corroboration with all subsequent research to this initial research activity — research based upon committee's experiences and intuitions.

Cultural reproduction of community leadership

Keeping in mind that we are reporting on the first 15 months of a two to three year project in Bellevue, the issue of cultural reproduction is emerging as a dominant theme (Bernstein 1977, Bourdieu 1977). Class, family socialisation and personality seem to be predictors of leadership (Rossides 1976). Within a rural community the size of Bellevue, class may have a diminished role. The distance between classes is perceived to be narrower than in a larger urban setting. And, the youth who are most likely to leave the community upon high school graduation are those with cultural and economic means. Therefore, the available pool of leaders to draw upon is limited within the elite classes. Family socialisation, hence, may be a stronger determinant in identifying potential leaders.

The symbolic universe (Berger and Luckmann 1966) of leadership connects existing leaders to predecessors and successors. Hence the collective memory of leadership within a small rural community might in fact be extremely limited. In Bellevue, the connection between past and present leaders, as well as those who will assume leadership in the future, is relatively linear. Persons selected by other leaders on the four questions in the leadership study were overwhelmingly male, Catholic, and defined as the 'old guard', with at least twenty year of residence in the community. The four teenagers who participated throughout most of the first year are from families of leaders, and personally are seen as leaders among their peers.

Whereas the literature on cultural reproduction focuses on the negative aspects related to preserving the status quo of the social elite, the Bellevue example seems more complex. The sincerity of the steering committee to invite people from the community who had not previously acted in a leadership role resulted in the creation a very diverse group from which to begin the project. Yet, after approximately nine months of working together, we started to see many of the potential new leaders stepping off to the side in deference to the established leaders. From our perspective, we did not witness any acts or behaviours within the group that would have encouraged people to leave the project. In fact, when we approached formerly active members to solicit their input and encourage them to rejoin the group, we did not hear of one negative comment or incident that might have resulted in their decision to leave the committee. Rather we heard about other demands upon their time such as church, family or business. Thus, it may be speculated that an important aspect of cultural reproduction is the intergenerational inheritance of community service as a family tradition. Though that 'service' may be self-serving to a degree, conversely, there seems to be a lack of this tradition among other families, particularly the working class and small farmers.

Issues

Cultural reproduction of leadership within a community can only be discussed in the context of the entire BCT project. Even though the group is still actively engaged and starting to realise tangible results from their months of hard work, we cannot ignore the fact that the size of Bellevue's BCT committee is about 33% of its original size of 35 members. Reasons for this drop-off might be attributed to poor or inadequate programme design of BCT; too much emphasis on research and analysis rather than action; a lack of immediate results; and/or poor facilitation on our part. Yet, we cannot ignore the reality of modern families with the many demands upon their limited time and energy. The question, though, that we raise is why have some individuals remained active, and why is it that they are from families with established leadership traditions?

Participatory research as a tool for social change within rural communities should also be examined. Can PR be used in a non-revolutionary setting — such as the rural Midwest? Most description and examples of PR emphasise the popular education opportunities in grossly exploited situations, among severely disadvantaged groups (*Participatory Research*, Fals-Borda and Rahman). We see rural communities such as Bellevue becoming marginalised within society, subject to exploitation and low wages, with limited economic or social opportunity. Social capital is for most rural communities their greatest asset. PR, as a means to community empowerment and actualisation, may enable rural communities to clarify issues and problems required for targeted strategies and investment of this asset.

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Disciplining gender: the impact of feminism and women's studies on the study of adult education

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What better example is there than feminism to illustrate the theme of this conference? As border crossers and boundary raiders, feminists, and particularly those involved in the development of women's studies, have lessons for those studying the education of adults who are concerned with disciplines. Using a rather militaristic metaphor, feminists have challenged the symbolic and cultural borderlands surrounding universities; they have fought to open up the academy to those normally excluded by 'nationality' (gender, race, disability and sexuality for example) or 'residence' requirements (such as traditional educational experience); they have marched on the walls of disciplinary protectionism and fought the battle for interdisciplinarity; they have insisted on new alliances and relationships across what were inimical schools and departments; they have forced the reconceptualisation of the old theory/practice divide which underpinned so many disciplinary arguments; they have, indeed, been so successful that, at times, they appear to have won the war — some have even argued that we are now living in 'post-feminist' times.[1]

The parallels between feminism and women's studies on the one hand, and the study of the education of adults on the other are fascinating. Both stem from a political commitment to a more democratic and fair society; both emphasise the knowledge/power conjunction; both have fought for acceptability from outside the walls of the academy (literally, as the term 'extramural' demonstrates); and both have worked and identified closely with grassroots organisations, political struggles, marginalised groups and communities. Yet, in reviewing papers from SCUTREA papers over the past 27 years, it appears as if, at least in Britain, one has had little direct impact on the other. There are, of course, notable exceptions (including the work of Nell Keddie, Jane Thompson and Sallie Westwood) to which I shall return but, surprisingly, the awareness of gender at least, and feminism at best, as an organising framework within the study of the education of adults, has been remarkably underdeveloped.

This becomes particularly noticeable when one considers earlier arguments about 'forms' of knowledge (disciplines) versus 'fields' of study — as Usher, Bryant and Johnston summarise:

> Disciplines, it can be argued, have a foundational position in relation to essentially practical fields of knowledge such as education ... In a field of knowledge the knowledge itself originates from outside the field in relevant foundation disciplines. (1997, 69)

Academic feminism has long since challenged this foundational model through its observations about the 'man-made' nature of disciplines, its refutation of the purported claim of disciplines to universal knowledge, and its fundamental reconceptualisation of the relationship between research and political action. So, for example, within psychology, the most likely candidate for foundational claims for adult education practice, feminist psychologists have mounted a sustained campaign against the disciplinary notions of 'truth' and universality (Henriques *et al.* 1984; Potter and Wetherell 1987; Hollway 1989; also see below). They have considered critically the relationship between psychology and its disciplinary power in the 'real' world of practices such as education (Walkerdine 1991), psychotherapy (Kitzinger and Perkins 1993) and child development (Burman 1994); indeed, they have engaged with many of the same problems of the disciplining of the subject as adult educators, albeit with a different focus. It would therefore seem to me that many of the more recent developments within the study of the education of adults, and the freeing up of the 'subject', owe some debt to feminism.

This paper links to Paul Armstrong's contribution in this volume, *The end of discipline? Epistemological shifts in the study of the education of adults*, in which he addresses the issue of boundary maintenance within the study of the education of adults with respect to disciplines, interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinarity. Like him, I use SCUTREA's published proceedings (soon to appear as a CD-ROM) and my own experiences within the organisation since 1982 to consider the historical impact of feminism on disciplinary boundary maintenance within the study of the education of adults.

A little history

> For the benefit of those living on Mars I will begin by pointing out that the past twenty years have seen an explosion of feminist work in the academy. (Evans 1997, 46)

Since the early 1970s, British academic life, particularly in the social sciences and humanities, has undergone a revolution fuelled largely by feminism. The limits of feminism's impact and the reasons for them have been documented elsewhere, but the point remains that two related but nevertheless distinct forces for change have emerged: academic feminism and women's studies. As Mary Evans notes, women's studies are not necessarily and inevitably feminist if one takes feminism to mean the prioritising of women's interests over and above all others. However, feminism implies some form of political action — not an essential requirement of women-centred study.

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[1] But, as Jackie Fleming's cartoon depicts, we'll be post-feminists in post-patriarchy!

The differential impact of these two distinct forces on interdisciplinarity is significant. Whilst women's studies offered a focus on a particular subject of study (women) which brought together history, sociology, literature and even, latterly, psychology, it would have had less impact on the academy without the pressure of feminism within disciplines to change the disciplines themselves. In psychology's case (the one with which I am most familiar), feminists questioned psychology's view that it was an 'apolitical' discipline, challenged psychology's so-called objectivity, and offered a theoretical account of psychology's role in perpetuating oppression through its focus on individualism. Such interventions encouraged feminists to make cross-disciplinary connections well beyond the focus on women; new alliances were formed across disciplines and, perhaps most importantly, a new vantage point on knowledge emerged which links what would otherwise be disparate identities:

> Situating the feminist knower has gone hand in hand with the insistence that actually *all* knowledge is located and thus specific, that it is grounded and consequently has limits. It is arguable that this is the most revolutionary idea associated with feminism, of far more immediate danger to existing configurations of power than attempted re/orderings of the gender system. (Stanley 1997, 15.)

Disciplining the education of adults

So feminism and women's studies expanded disciplinary boundaries (by the explicit inclusion of feminist perspectives) and shattered them, particularly through the development of women's studies. The old political struggle, whether to fight for feminist approaches within disciplines or to create a new interdisciplinary approach all together, resonates strongly with the epistemological struggle taking place within the British study of the education of adults during the 1980s: was it a field of study or a discipline? Was it better to create and police a newly bounded discipline, or to locate the education of adults within history, psychology, economics and so on?

As Paul Armstrong's paper shows, this was a curiously gendered discussion — most, if not all, the participants were men. And, on searching through the original papers, it would appear that the whole debate took place without reference to feminism, gender or even women. With hindsight, the absence of feminists from this discussion explains the hermetically sealed flavour of some of the contributions, but feminists within SCUTREA had preoccupations other than the demarcation of the borders of adult education. Instead, they were concerned with rather more subversive sallies into the political arena.

The women fight back

In a search through the papers between 1970 and 1979, I found very few references to women (and those were generally made by international visitors who seemed rather more gender conscious such as Kidd 1979, and Knoll 1979), none to feminism and none to gender. Feminist interventions at SCUTREA may well have taken place before, but the conference in 1980 marked its official emergence — the first time the 'f' word appeared in print in the proceedings. A group of women met together that year to consider women and continuing education, and each presented a short paper[2]; it would be remarkable that little notice was taken of this significant shift in SCUTREA's concerns, if it were not for the fact that there has rarely been an ongoing discussion from year to year (see for example Zukas 1996). However, some of the disciplinary issues raised by feminists in other parts of the academy were raised at this early stage by Helen Callaway, in her paper on the implications of women's studies scholarship for teaching and research in the education of adults:

> ... within each discipline (psychology, sociology, anthropology, history, linguistics, literary criticism) this feminist scholarship asks new questions and presents new data and interpretations. However controversial this might appear and threatening to entrenched ideas, this scholarship can no longer be ignored or dismissed as merely 'polemical'. (1980, 35)

However, her intervention did not challenge the disciplinary view of adult education; rather, she pointed out that each discipline making up the field needed to consider the impact of feminism, thus retaining the old notion of foundational disciplines.

These feminist discussions apparently disappeared

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[2] The five papers in the 'Women and adult education' group session of the 1980 SCUTREA conference proceedings were Leni Oglesby 'A statistical search for women in UK university departments of continuing education, or equivalent'; Nell Keddie 'Women in the occupational structure of adult education', Jane Thompson 'Second chance for women: a course challenging traditional women's education', Ailsa Swarbrick 'Encouraging the others: research on women in a technology foundation course' and Helen Callaway 'The inclinations of women's studies'.

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underground in 1981 (at least in the formal record), and when I attended my first conference in 1982, there was no planned feminist contribution to the conference. However, the women's group intervened at one of the plenary events, to a lukewarm if not adverse reception:

> I formed the impression that SCUTREA was primarily an old boys' club, an impression confirmed at a conference in 1982. On this occasion, the female participants (eight of us in all) took the decision to set up an interest group on Women and Adult Education, to be constituted, at least initially, as a women-only group. When we discussed who should make the announcement at the AGM, I drew the short straw. My speech was greeted with shouts of protest. (Miller 1993, 165)

However, this marked a shift towards a redefinition of discipline. Instead of convening to discuss sociology, psychology or history, feminists were able to coalesce around a common political purpose — the feminisation and democratisation of SCUTREA. By 1985, women had captured one of three conference strands[3] and were working across disciplinary boundaries towards a reconceptualisation of their work — or a new tribal identity in Becher's terms. The women and adult education group provided a conceptual focus for those who identified themselves as feminists and enabled them to cut across the pre-existing epistemological and methodological restrictions of the previous disciplinary approaches. But the disruption of feminism was always seen as a 'women's issue' — discussions about its repercussions for other debates were sorely absent from SCUTREA.

Instead, a newly coherent subject of study (women) emerged which united interests in learners, teachers, pedagogy and curriculum. The difficulties presented by the focus on women (and a form of women's studies), rather than on feminism, were to come later — but for now, women were a hot topic. Jane Thompson's *Learning liberation: women's response to men's education* (1983), which drew on Sallie Westwood and Nell Keddie's work, presented the most coherent theoretical feminist intervention in the adult education debate, while others focused on provision and good practice.

Developing difference

But this newly constructed subject of study — women — carried its own seeds of destruction. The politics of 'difference' within feminism began to emerge from Black feminists' criticisms of (white) feminist thinking which were two-fold: firstly, white feminist theories were essentialist, and secondly, they ignored diversity amongst women (for example, Amos and Parmar 1984, hooks 1984). In some parts of adult education, as elsewhere, this rallying cry of diversity led to an emphasis on 'difference' as a new way forward, but there was little consideration of the impact of such an approach on the epistemology and ontology of the field. Instead, discussions were, on the whole, restricted to practice.

By 1987, the warning bells were rung as a new emphasis emerged:

> I think that some of the dilemmas adult education has ... are similar to the dilemmas that the women's movement has been faced with in wanting to draw upon bodies of knowledge and theory, but actually having a very strong commitment to something called experience, and the idea that we can share experience — that's a very large idea, that you can share experiences with someone, and yet it's central to us and not examined. It is a heuristic device, and we have to have it'. (Westwood 1987)

The issue of experience haunted both feminist academics and those within adult education — particularly within the classroom (Fuss 1988). The focus on 'experiential learning' and facilitation could lead to a non-critical validation of all experience — indeed how was it possible to take account of the structural and cultural differences between individuals — such as class, race, ethnicity, sexuality — and still maintain an experiential (and even feminist) approach? Was it possible for those concerned with the education of adults to deal with 'experience' theoretically, and if so, how were feminist issues to be addressed within this context?

Redrawing the boundaries

This new concern with experience opened up possibilities for those researching the education of adults. Suddenly, feminist concerns were taken up, not in the guise of a focus on women or even gender, but in the newly fashionable focus on subjectivity and reflective practice. I would argue that, on the whole, the quarrels about discipline disappeared from SCUTREA's proceedings in the mid to late 1980s (see Armstrong, in this volume, 16-20) as a result of this newly constituted set of research concerns — and feminism provided the legitimating force for such developments. Of course, there were other influences within the academy — particularly within cultural studies, broadly defined. But the coalition between feminists across disciplines provided the opportunity for adult education theorists to break away from the earlier disciplinary stranglehold, and create new interdisciplinary focuses for the study of the education of adults.

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[3] This strand, convened by Sallie Westwood and me, was entitled 'Changing curriculum in women's education'; it included contributions on women and technology (Elisabeth Gerver and Ailsa Swarbrick), late nineteenth century innovations in women's adult education (Elizabeth Bird), and an examination of adult education's role in gender construction (Nell Keddie).

In my view, there were two stages to the creation of new bounded areas. SCUTREA's first international conference, *Transatlantic Dialogue* (1988), offered participants the chance to escape the uncertainties of adult education's status; instead, it was refreshing to be surrounded with colleagues who were not hampered by the constraints of their disciplinary baggage (although, as Armstrong remarks in this volume, several British participants remained preoccupied with the disciplinary debate). There were some remarkable contributions for those of us who had separated out our adult education identities from the feminist inroads we were making elsewhere (my personal favourites being Wendy Luttrell and Jane Munro's contributions), and the presence of so many women presenters at what had been, until then, a predominantly male event proved to be a turning point for the organisation as well (Zukas 1994).

The second stage in the emergence of these new feminist concerns was the 1993 conference, *Research: reflecting practice* (Miller and Jones). The sub-sections of the proceedings read like a feminist handbook on research: epistemological issues, auto/biography and life history, practitioner-based research, relations with the researched and so on. Suddenly, feminist issues and debates had a direct relevance for those writing about researching the education of adults. What makes this intervention so interesting though is that feminism itself was rarely addressed directly. Instead, it was simply part of the intellectual atmosphere, the references, the common ground (to pursue the conference metaphor, the shared borderlands).

So how could one account for this dramatic change — a change which had been resisted vigorously only ten years earlier? In my view, one answer lay in the availability of new research funds for those working in continuing education departments. For the sake of brevity, it only needs to be noted here that a large number of research projects were developed in the early 1990s, which resulted in a brand new cohort of research assistants and associates (Zukas 1994). These individuals had not necessarily been trained in the education of adults, but were recruited on fixed-term contracts to work with research grant holders. Inevitably, many of these new recruits were social scientists — very often, women — who had been working within feminist-influenced paradigms and brought with them new ways of thinking about the education of adults. The 1993 conference had partly been intended as an opportunity for these individuals to exchange ideas.

Furthermore, the focus on research, and its relationship with practice, encouraged those who had previously ignored such issues to think about the construction of knowledge, the power relationships of researchers and those they research (rather than educators and those they educate), the very nature of research itself. This reflexivity followed paths laid down earlier by feminist social science researchers.

The uptake of these ideas and others perhaps more correctly aligned with postmodernism generally are apparent in the proceedings of this conference. Within the field, they are expressed most clearly in the context of discussions about the construction of knowledge; learning as self-construction; work on autobiography and life history; and the vigorous debate about reflective practice as learning, teaching and research framework. I would argue that feminism provided the main intellectual impetus for this recent acknowledgement of the self within our field. This refocusing on the self and experience gave a theoretical dynamism to the field and moved the debate into new realms.

Carry on learning

However, we cannot afford to stop learning from feminism and women's studies now. Feminists have a troubled relationship with academe, with disciplines, with the discordant sense of being outside the boundaries for some purposes, and very much inside the boundaries for others. Liz Stanley characterises this schism with the notion of 'passing women':

> At its most basic this means becoming invisible. Women are the means that make it [the university] work, its chief labour power, the source of its divisions of labour so that men at all levels can have their organisational noses and bums wiped and nicely flattering and size-enhancing mirrors held up before them...[but] let us be clear that these are the other side of the very things that we despise or criticise, the sickle side of the moon [...] knowledge, independence of mind, intellectual space, transformative thought. (Stanley 1997, 201)

Perhaps the clearest expression of these difficulties in terms of discipline is the impact of current policies in defining and assessing research within British universities (see Armstrong 1997). Feminists face the same difficulties with the imposition of disciplinary territories as those working within continuing education. One cannot be judged except as an appendage to another disciplinary area (initial education in our case, sociology in feminist and women's studies' case). We cannot do without discipline — but, as Robin Usher and his colleagues remind us, this need not be a hierarchical relationship with disciplines providing the foundation for adult education:

> ... it is the field, not the discipline which should frame the issues, Doing this ensures that the field of study is 'in' but not 'of' disciplines, informed but not 'in-formed' by them. (1997, 90).

We need to find some collective strategy that allows us to 'develop our own discourse'. Unlike feminism, which has a ready-made if somewhat contentious focus for its concerns (women/gender), we have no readily agreed field of practice to study. Usher *et al.* argue that the focus should be developing adult learning — others may wish to take issue with such an individualised and undifferentiated concept, or indeed argue with the notion of 'adulthood'.

Feminism also teaches us that there are dangers ahead — dangers if we focus too much on questions of identity and individualism, selfhood and experience. Postmodern feminism offers us an inoculation against some of our tendencies towards essentialising learning, essentialising learners, but it also carries a health warning:

> At worst it has become a revitalised agenda in favour of relativism and pluralism. A collapse into individualistic reductionism that could destroy the possibility of collective action and suppress political will. (Thompson 1995, 132).

Indeed, some have blamed feminists' adoption of postmodern ideas for the general incorporation and political annihilation of feminism within much of higher education in Britain and more globally. In our rejection of discipline, our campaigning for interdisciplinarity, our drive for inclusiveness, let us hear the warning that feminism offers us!

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Symposia

From teaching to facilitation to animation: crossing the boundaries between traditions and perspectives in the promotion of learning from experience

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The contributors to this paper and symposium share an interest in the process of helping others to learn from experience. The continuing conversation in which we have been engaged, of which this text and the event at the conference are parts, has involved the crossing of physical and virtual boundaries between countries, cultures, disciplines, traditions and spheres of practice. In the course of our thinking, writing and talking to one another, we have developed a concept of our practice as educators which we term animation. Our aims in the paper and the symposium are:

- to continue and to open to others our conversation about the promotion of learning from experience;
- to examine the values and theories underlying animation and how animation might differ from facilitation or teaching; and
- to generate questions and frameworks for research in this area.

All of the contributors to this paper wrote chapters for *Working with Experience: Animating Learning* (Boud and Miller, 1996), which was aimed at giving insights into the activities of people who contribute to others' learning from experience, and provided case studies and discussion about promoting such learning. In our early discussions about this project, we expressed our intentions in terms of a desire to produce 'a book about facilitation'. We invited contributors on the basis of their established expertise and sought to include authors who employed strongly contrasting perspectives. They came from a wide range of backgrounds, including adult, higher and teacher education, community work, organisational development, group relations training and psychotherapy, and were based in many different countries: Australia, Brazil, Italy, New Zealand, the United States and the UK. They brought a wide range of theoretical perspectives to bear on their work, including feminism, marxism, critical pedagogy, postmodernism, and Gestalt, humanistic, clinical and transpersonal psychology. Contributors were asked to describe and analyse their own practice, writing themselves into their chapters so that their accounts would be grounded in personal experience as well as professional practice and social scientific theory. The accounts also contain reflections on the learning the writers themselves underwent as they engaged in the process of promoting the learning of others. An important element in the construction of the book was the practice of asking the author of each chapter to comment on several other chapters.

A good deal of the discussion between the two editors focused on the question of the label to be attached to the role of people who were working to promote others' learning from experience. Although we had begun by using the term 'facilitation' to refer to the activity we were trying to capture and analyse, we became increasingly uneasy with this term as our discussions continued.

The supportive person who facilitates learning rather than acting as teacher, and is there to help learners learn what is important to them rather than what is defined as important by teachers, is a familiar figure in the discourses of adult education and experiential learning. Training in facilitation skills and group work is now a standard feature of courses for adult educators, while butchers' paper/newsprint and flip-charts have become defining icons of facilitation. However, facilitation is a term which carries a good deal of conceptual baggage.

There are two traditions within which ideas about the promotion of learning from experience have developed. The first is the humanistic psychological tradition, which has been particularly influential in the context of client-centred counselling and human relations training, with its emphasis on personal growth, autonomy and self-actualisation; the second is the collectivist, social action tradition with its grounding in the intellectual tradition of critical social science, and its emphasis on learning and questioning in and of groups. The function of facilitator is explicit in the first tradition, while in the second there is no commonly-used term equivalent to facilitator. Yet we believe that there is much of value in both traditions, and that it should be possible to draw from both of them, as well as from the insights of feminists, postmodernists and others, a way of facing the challenges of promoting learning in a changing world. In such a synthesis attention should be paid to such features of the social world as power, oppression and difference, and it should be possible to build upon an analysis of the ways in which factors like gender, ethnicity and social class impact on learning.

We suggest the term animation, rather than facilitation, to describe the function of the person who works with the experience of others to promote learning in a practice synthesised from these traditions. We argue that animation in the promotion of learning from experience requires attention to the relationship between animators and learners; to the significance of feelings and emotions in the learning process; to context and discourse; and to relations of domination and subordination in learning relationships. We recognise the preliminary nature of our formulation and acknowledge the need to develop a more detailed theory of animation. This conference, which brings together many people with an interest in promoting learning from experience, affords the opportunity for collective theory-building. Among those present are likely to be people who have roots in contrasting traditions and identities tied to different disciplines, ideological frameworks and styles of practice. Since the role of the animator, as we define it, draws on traditions and perspectives which have often been seen in opposition to one another, the conference theme of crossing borders and breaking boundaries provides us with an appropriate environment in which to conduct a dialectical conversation aimed at fruitful synthesis.

In order to provide a framework for the conversation we wish to initiate in the symposium, we posed five questions, to which each contributor was asked to respond briefly by e-mail or fax. The responses are set out below in the order in which they were received.

How would you describe your role in helping others learn?

Jim Brown: Probably by saying that I always approach my work as combination of research and enquiry, campaign and political mission, and as the pursuit of happiness, excitement and creativity. In other words I try to set a good example for the other people I work with. I suspect this role-model style of animation comes from the traditions I learnt in the T-group. I try to be the model learner.

John Bernard Harris: In my role as an animator of learning in a variety of settings my first task is to try to create a group environment in which there is a flexible and changing balance of support and challenge. Within this environment I see my role as primarily involving two tasks. The first is to help people to recognise, access and use their life experiences and the knowledge and skills they have gained through them. And the second is to help them make full use of all their faculties in the present task. If they are aware of their surroundings and themselves—what they perceive, think, feel and want—they will find creative ways to solve their current problems.

Jane Mace: Those of us who teach literacy to adults have had various disguises. In the early 1970s, we were 'tutors', or more often volunteer tutors, of literacy. Later, once the campaign for achieving paid status was under way, we called ourselves 'workers'—partly to avoid the dangerous associations of 'teacher', and partly (I think) to identify ourselves with others in the trade union struggle. In the 1980s, the terms 'instructor' and/or 'trainer' gained currency; and in the 1990s, those who have full-time paid jobs employed by colleges or local authorities have become known as 'managers'; the rest (the large majority, as always, being women and part-time) are still tutors, now not of literacy, but of 'basic skills'. The person working with adults in the landscapes of literacy is undertaking a far more varied and complex journey than someone guiding learners through the scrubland of 'basic skills'. We persist with the word 'literacy' to denote the subject; I happen, too, to have long favoured 'educator' to denote the role. I like the idea of 'animator' as proposed by Nod Miller and David Boud (Boud and Miller 1996, pp. 7-10). As they suggest, it denotes a vivacity on the part of both learner and teacher and a quickening of the spirit and intellect, which is what I aspire to create in the work I do. The term 'educator' remains my preference, however, and specifically, 'adult literacy educator' — the person engaged in adult literacy education — because it seems to me to convey a message I see as an important one to assert: namely, that this work belongs, not on the edges of lifelong learning, but at its centre (hence the subtitle I chose for Mace [1992]).

Elizabeth Tisdell: Much of my teaching centres around 'crossing borders' and dealing with diversity and equity issues in adult higher education. My role is to connect theory and practice, the rational/analytical with the affective/experiential, in helping students become better educators. We begin with our experience, then theorise it as we look at more analytical material related to the subject under study. Students also (in a collaborative small group) facilitate one creative activity intended to unite both conceptual and experiential modes of learning.

Tim Ireland: One of the basic ingredients has to be that of learning to listen to others and, therefore, hopefully being open to new learning. If we believe in learning from our own experience and that of others we have to learn to listen with critical patience.

Stephen Brookfield: 'Helping people learn what they do' is how the adult educator Myles Horton described his life's work at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. When I heard Myles speak this phrase to a group of educators in New York I was taken immediately with how it captured what I saw happening in the best kind of critical reflection groups. In these groups people come to realise the value of their own experiences, they take a critical perspective on these, and they learn how to use this reflection to help them deal with whatever problems they face. In Myles' words:

> I knew that it was necessary ... to draw out of people their experience, and help them value group experiences and learn from them. It was essential that people learned to make decisions on the basis of analysing and trusting their own experience, and learning from what was good and what was bad ... I believed then and still believe that you learn from your experience of doing something and from your analysis of that experience (Horton, 1990, 57).

David Boud: My work now is mainly with teachers, trainers and facilitators of the learning of adults who work in a very wide variety of mainly institutional settings in the public and private sectors. My role is to raise their awareness of the influence of their practice on learners and learning and particularly assist them to see their practice from the perspective of the learners with whom they are working.

Nod Miller: Whether I'm working with undergraduates or doctoral students, staff teams or groups of peers, large groups or individuals, I try to retain awareness of some key principles, which include: building on learners' prior experience; recognising the impact of structural aspects of experience such as gender, social class, ethnicity and age on the learning process; creating space for systematic reflection on experience; and trying to make the process of learning fun. I put a good deal of creative energy into strategies for constructing harmonious and inclusive working groups. I am trying to integrate theory and practice and research and teaching, and see myself as engaged as learner as well as animator. I frequently blur the boundaries between personal and professional spheres. It has been suggested to me that my name stands for 'Never Off Duty', and I do tend to conceptualise the role of animator as a non-stop activity.

What conceptual frameworks, key ideas or theoretical material have you been influenced by or do you draw upon in practising your role in helping others to learn from experience?

Jim Brown: In my contribution to the book I focused on the influence Paulo Freire (1972) had on my work. There are many other sources of inspiration, mostly associated with my postgraduate studies at the Department of Management Studies, University of Leeds, which in turn had been strongly influenced by American practitioners of Organisation Development (OD) such as Roger Harrison, publications such as *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, the T-group traditions of NTL (National Training Laboratories) and the socio-technical systems school at the Tavistock Institute. My personal tutor was Ken Bamforth, an ex-miner who worked with Eric Trist (a Tavistock socio-technical systems theorist) and my external examiner was Professor Gurth Higgin (by then at Loughborough University, but also ex-Tavistock). I was at Leeds University during the mid 1970s, very much at the tail end of the radical OD tradition upheld by that Department. Elsewhere in the UK, American OD consultants were being sacked by the big British multi-nationals. The Bullock Inquiry into industrial democracy was in full flight, but at the same time seemed doomed to failure. I resented not being born perhaps ten years earlier.

John Bernard Harris: The main conceptual framework I use is that of Gestalt therapy. This integrates aspects of social psychological field theory, phenomenological method and existentialist thought.

Jane Mace: One of the earliest texts published from adult literacy learners' experience was written by a student called Carol Belsey. It first appeared in a booklet called 'Father's Cap' published by Cambridge House Literacy Scheme when I was its Director in 1975; it later appeared in the first edition of the national newsletter produced by a collective of adult literacy 'workers' called 'Write First Time' (There is at Ruskin College library a full archive of Write First Time's work [1975-1986]). The title was 'Fear'. Its subject was the fear experienced by the author when faced with a form she had to fill in. Her message was that the problem she faced was not so much the inability to spell or compose sentences, as the fear of not being able to. The text, along with a growing number of others produced from a movement of community publishing out of adult literacy classes, was used up and down the country as reading material for other literacy learners for years. When I read Bob Johnson's call for a recognition that 'the one emotion that matters above all others is fear' (Boud and Miller 1996, 185), this text, from over twenty years ago, suddenly returned to me.

Elizabeth Tisdell: The conceptual framework I use in practising this role is poststructural feminist pedagogy which highlights how one's positionality — one's race, gender, class, and so on — affects the way one constructs knowledge (Tisdell, 1995). It also focuses on the connections between individual learners and the structural systems of privilege and oppression that partially inform how they think, how they teach and learn, and what is constructed as the 'canon' of a particular field. This line of thought is similar to what Pettman describes as moving 'from the local to the global and back again' (Boud and Miller, 1996, 95). The positionality of all participants, including the instructor, and the connections between the global and local, are very important here in examining the themes of (1) the construction of knowledge; (2) voice and silence; (3) authority; (4) how to deal with difference.

Tim Ireland: For those Latin American adult educators concerned with the contribution of education to the construction of a more just and democratic society — amongst whom I would include myself — the general framework of Popular Education has provided a broad frame of reference. The various theoretical threads which compose the fabric of Popular Education are many, but there is no denying the importance of Paulo Freire's contribution to this perspective, particularly his concern for the social relevance of education and its contribution to critical awareness. Furthermore, Gramsci's conceptual framework, with his key ideas of the organic intellectual and the defining role of work experience, has been influential.

Stephen Brookfield: In recent years, as I've worked more and more with helping teachers set up critical reflection groups, Myles Horton's words are always at the front of my mind.

David Boud: The single greatest influence on my work has been that of John Heron, mostly through his personal practice. I have found his emphasis on taking into account the whole person, the need to acknowledge and work with the emotional content of learners' experience and his analyses of dimensions of intervention and facilitation of particular value (see, for example, Heron 1990, 1993). Over the past 13 years or so I have been grappling with my own frameworks and models (mainly in conjunction with David Walker) which draw on a wide variety of sources. More recently I have been influenced by critical theory and aspects of postmodernism, particularly related to issues of power and authority.

Nod Miller: I borrow insights and models from many disparate sources, and influences on my thinking and practice include: work on feminist auto/biography; C. Wright Mills's notion of the sociological imagination (Mills 1970); writings on the theory and methodology of T-groups, derived from the work of Kurt Lewin; and texts in media sociology, cultural studies and the sociology of knowledge. I have also learned enormously from friends and colleagues with whom I have collaborated in organising events or in writing; I think it is very important to acknowledge the intellectual debts I have incurred the course of interpersonal contact as well as through my interaction with texts. SCUTREA events and the conferences of allied professional organisations have been for me extremely important sites for learning and collaboration.

Take one scenario from your practice and use it to give the flavour of your work as an animator, bringing in any key themes that characterise this work.

Jim Brown: For the last twelve months I have been working on a development project devising new approaches to training in innovation skills for small businesses. I have been working with 10 small businesses, all of which can be described as innovative, partly by virtue of their organisational form (all are workers' co-operatives; democratically owned and controlled by employees) and partly by their choice of market sector (all started out in new niche markets which they created and developed). The project centred on a series of monthly group workshops. Each business was also asked to identify and implement six small innovation projects of their own; one of these projects was undertaken by a final-year New Technology student. As well as managing the monthly group workshops, I helped each business to identify suitable innovation projects, prepare project plans and in some cases I worked with them to implement these plans. On the surface this project has used fairly conventional action learning techniques, (described by many people but most pertinently for me by Reg Revans, 1982). However, a distinguishing aspect of my work was to use the project to explore the meaning of innovation within a small business context and particularly within a co-operatively managed small business. My opening thesis was that the participating businesses, most of which had been trading for at least 10 years, had reached a stage of maturity in both their organisational form and choice of product market, where they needed to either re-invent themselves, or face the prospect of long term decline. My role as animator, was to challenge the conventions which had grown up around their practices, some of which were particular to individual businesses, but a surprising number of which were common to all ten. Firstly, it proved to be very easy to get these businesses to generate new ideas but very difficult to get them to implement them. It was as though the participants couldn't imagine themselves changing. It wasn't until the later stages of the project that some of the participants began to realise how the project was affecting their thinking and behaviour. Almost too late, they wanted the workshops to be more challenging and experimental.

John Bernard Harris: I recently worked with a large team of over 40 people on an away-day. They wished to get some sense of how they functioned by exploring current communication and relationship patterns at work. The question in the air was: 'Are we a team, and if so what kind of a team?' As a way of starting to explore existing sub-groupings, I asked people to get into their primary working groups and gave the groups 15 minutes to devise a two-minute presentation for the whole team using any form or medium they wanted. The aim was for them to make a collective statement about their work — what it was, how they felt about it and so on. Everyone was soon busy with this task. The presentations were varied and included posters, songs and drama. As well as the exercise being fun, processing what had happened during the exercise provided lots of useful observations and reflections on the inter-group relationships within the larger team whole, which led on to further explorations around the central theme during the day.

Jane Mace: Thanks to what has become known as 'the new literacy studies', many are now prepared to recognise literacy as a plural set of activities, in everyday life as much as in institutional settings: giving hospitality to study skills teaching for undergraduates as the business of 'academic literacy' (Taylor *et al.* 1988). In my experience (from both sectors) undergraduate students display fears of reading and writing which are not unlike those of 'basic skills' learners. For them, as for Carole Belsey, the problem which stands in their way is not an innate inability to perform, but the fear that they will fail to do so; and my effort, as animator of their courage and creative energies, is primarily directed at dispelling it, freeing them to focus on how they can use what they already know to deal with what they don't. In Boud and Miller (1996, 180) I described three of the ways I use to achieve this, which, like Jan Jindy Pettman's approaches, assume that good talk and listening are essential to confident reading and writing (Boud and Miller, 96-97) . Using another animation approach, I engage the student group as active allies for an individual's learning. The context here is an MA course in Adult Community Education: Policies and Practice, which I have been teaching at Goldsmiths' College, University of London. For their assessed work, students have to write a piece of five thousand words on a topic related to the course; and in the latter end of the course I ask each student to prepare and provide presentations of their 'work in progress' on their chosen topic to the group as a whole. Presentations are a common enough seminar strategy. The difference, here, is the responsibility given, first to rest of the group (told that they are to provide attentive listening and constructive questioning to the presenter) and second, to one member of the group, who volunteers to act as the presenter's scribe. Her role is to log, for the presenter, the questions asked of her by the group after she has completed her presentation.

Tim Ireland: In March, I was involved in teaching a course on 'Adult Education, Work and Citizenship' as part of the in-service diploma programme for educators from two large organisations with strong links with the Catholic church and with a long and rich experience in adult and popular education. All those taking part were either animators or educators with responsibility for the formation of other workers. As part of my concern to bridge the divide between experiential learning and more formal learning processes, I was concerned to use the participants' experience as a fundamental point of reference on which to base certain theoretical reflections. At the same time I was attempting to construct, collectively, indicators with which to analyse the practices in which they were engaged as a means of assisting them to systematise their own practice and hopefully to arrive at a deeper theoretical understanding of that practice. Although the majority claimed that one of their principal concerns was to assist those with whom they worked to learn from their own experience, they revealed great difficulty — and in some cases resistance — in attempting to analyse and systematise their own experience as animators and popular educators. This tends to reinforce what Gramsci wrote over 70 years ago on the basis of his experience: 'The popular element 'feels' but does not always know or understand; the intellectual 'knows' but does not always understand and in particular does not always feel. The intellectual's error consists in believing that one can know without understanding and even more without feeling and being impassioned.' (Gramsci, 1982, 418)

Stephen Brookfield: To me, 'helping people learn what they do' is the chief educational process that happens in critical reflection groups. The most valuable moments in such a group happen not when teachers are introduced to new methods, techniques or practical approaches that will help them in their work, important though these suggestions are. Of much greater long-term importance are the moments when people realise and take seriously the skills, knowledge and insights they possess and when they come to interpret their practice in a new way. Transformative moments in teachers' lives come when they shift their perspective on a familiar situation so that it is illuminated in a wholly different light.

David Boud: I encourage my (mainly) Masters students to bring examples of their practice and that of their organisation to class and to explore them from the point of view of the perspectives to which they have been introduced (as above). Increasingly, I have found it profitable to view examples of practice from an ethical perspective and ask students to examine them from the point of view of

- how the activity/learning linked to the prior experiences of the learners;
- whose interests were being served in each case (for example, those of the learner, the facilitator or the organisation)?;
- examining the context and its influence (in the immediate setting, in the organisation in which the activity takes place and in the broader socio-cultural-political context).

I then invite them to identify the scope which exists for them as animators to create and sustain a micro-culture which enables participants to acknowledge the influences which act upon them, but to set them aside for the purposes which they have agreed. In extended programs they would rehearse what they would do in the light of their analysis and practice interventions for use within a particular organisational setting. This can be profoundly discomforting for some animators as they can often realise how limited their influence is and the extent to which they are captive of the organisation and context in which they operate. However, it is nearly always possible to find some scope for action which sustains work which is ethically acceptable to the animator and addresses the learners as persons rather than as functionaries of the organisation.

Nod Miller: I am currently director of a project aimed at enhancing access to IT-related higher education through the use of computer-aided distance learning (described more fully elsewhere in these proceedings). The project team is currently engaged in research which is informing the design of multimedia teaching and learning for a foundation course for ethnic minority women students in new technology which we will be delivering for the first time next academic session. Central to this project is the concept of using the technology which is the subject of study as the medium for learning, and members of the project team are devising learning materials which put the learners' experiences and perceptions of and interactions with technology at the centre of the curriculum. We hope that the research data we are collecting in the course of planning and implementing this project will inform future directions for distance learning in our institution and beyond. My ideas about experiential learning have been important in the overall aims and shape of the project, but on a week-to-week basis my practice as an animator is lived out in my leadership of the project team. Since we intend to encourage students to record and analyse their own experiences with technology, we are modelling this practice by keeping reflective diaries of our experiences in the project, and reviewing collectively our learning based on the diaries during project meetings. I am working as hard as I can to foster a climate and culture in the team which enables learning and action to be accomplished and managed in as enjoyable, stress-free and challenging a way as possible. One element in this culture which I am working to create is the value of being kind to one another – and to oneself – in daily contact. I am constantly aware of the need to mediate the tensions in the operations and ideologies of contemporary university life for the people whose learning I am required to manage as well as share. I am also conscious of the need to be sensitive to the constraints on autobiographical exploration and reflection on experience imposed by considerations of hierarchies and power imbalances in groups and teams.

What issues arise from this for wider consideration in the practice of animation?

Jim Brown: This is a difficult question to answer. I think there is still a lot of work to be done on encouraging people to feel comfortable with experimentation in learning. In management circles there is a lot of crap written about leadership and empowerment and I think that much of this could be usefully replaced by some solid understanding of animation and social change. The same is true of entrepreneurship; there is a load of garbage written about this subject which the practice of animation could usefully replace.

John Bernard Harris: The central issue for me is this: How can I help participants to draw out and reflect on their existing ('naive') knowledge of team interaction and dynamics, and offer conceptual frameworks which are useful to them in their understanding their experiences and behaviour? This work needs to be done in a way which encourages critical awareness of the impact of wider organisational and social contexts in which the team functions.

Jane Mace: Where did I first see the approach I described in the last section being used? Now I think about it, it was in a women's therapy group I belonged to, ten years ago. Why do I think it is useful? Because, from my own experience of that group, and my later observation of students, our anxiety to provide answers to questions can blot out for later the memory of what it is that we were asked: what, in short, other people want to know from us. The value of the written notes of questions, later, is to provide the student with the evidence of an interested listener/reader, and to recognise herself as an author. My interest in animation, in the end, is as a means to release creative energy and to develop a sense of authorship.

Elizabeth Tisdell: An example of how some of these issues play out in my practice is in order. In the final session of a class, three students, two white (one female, one hearing impaired male) and one black (female) led an experiential activity based on hooks' (1994) discussion of 'engaged pedagogy'. Our task was to form a tight circle and to pass a 'talking stick' around the circle, to discuss what this class meant to us. Participants could speak or 'pass' until the stick came around again. After the first go-round, the black woman facilitator noted that all the people of colour and the hearing impaired student spoke, and the white participants that spoke did so in a very emotional and vulnerable way, to the point of tears in many cases. She further noted that in classes like this, it is often the most marginalised and oppressed who are 'expected' to speak and educate, while the more privileged get to be the silent voyeurs. She pointed out the vulnerability of the white participants who spoke indicated, as she said, that 'you are willing to bleed with me' which made her a more willing participant.

Tim Ireland: For me, there are two basic issues. Firstly, we need to practise what we preach. How can we expect others to learn from their experience if we are incapable of reflecting and organising our own? And secondly, our belief in the importance of experience for real learning should stimulate us to work to narrow the gap between the formal and the experiential, however problematic that may be.

Stephen Brookfield: Some of the best conversations I've been involved with as an animator of teacher critical reflection groups are those where I see people relieved of self-lacerating guilt simply by their interpreting a 'problem' in a new way. This happens particularly with teachers' interpretations of what causes students' resistance to learning. Realising that resistance to learning is often a structural problem reflecting factors of class and ethnicity helps counter what Britzman (1991) describes as 'the myth that everything depends on the teacher'. In conversation with others teachers realise that students' hostility is caused by their experiences of earlier cultural suicide that accompanied their taking learning seriously, by their being victims of inconsistent and unrealistic institutional expectations, by administrative systems moving people through programmes too quickly under financial pressure, by curriculum designers ignoring the cultural backgrounds of different groups of students, by learners' bitter memories of previous injuries of class, or by teachers claiming benefits for learning that are manifestly false. This realisation relieves educators of the sense that their own personal inadequacies are to blame. By reinterpreting as a politically and culturally sculpted contradiction what was seen previously as a private failing, teachers remove from their shoulders the sense that their own lack of imagination, enthusiasm and conviction has turned students off learning.

David Boud: The main outcome for me has been to give increasing emphasis over the past few years to the ethical dimensions of experiential learning, to notice the extent to which practitioners abuse and misuse notions of experiential learning unknowingly and to find ways of drawing attention to fundamental values and beliefs of animators.

Nod Miller: As I am required increasingly to act as a manager of people and learning, I have become increasingly preoccupied with questions relating to material, symbolic and personal power, and with how to render visible and work to change power imbalance and inequity. Like David, I want to wrestle further with ethical considerations in relation to experiential learning.

Where might research on the process of animation go from here?

Jim Brown: Again, I'm struggling to answer this question. Personally I would welcome the opportunity to be much more experimental again. Nod and I ran an event in the mid-1980s called the Mini-Economy, inspired by the work of Gunnar Hjelholt (1972) and Gurth Higgin (1972) on Mini-Societies. I am genuinely excited by the potential of exploring innovation as a theme—a recent workshop I did with a university department of innovation studies on the past, present and future of that department gave me a glimmer of insight into how this word innovation might be used to stimulate social change. I think that experimentation and innovation are closely linked. Innovation is more than just a bright idea (abstract conceptualisation), it demands that these ideas are tried out in practice (experimentation). Maybe we are coming full circle and perhaps David's emphasis on reflection needs to lead to more experimentation.

John Bernard Harris: My ongoing research focuses on the following questions: 'What is it that works in terms of animation? What teaching methods, theoretical frameworks, levels and kinds of support are effective for different learners in different contexts? In particular, how can I help learners to access and develop personal qualities (life experience, personality, aptitudes) and integrate them with the requirements of, for example, a professional training role?

Jane Mace: The question I am still seeking to explore is: how best can we persist in an education which offers an animated literacy?

Elizabeth Tisdell: So what does this mean for the less vulnerable, more silent white members of the class including myself, the white instructor? Is our unwillingness to be as vulnerable part of clinging to our white privilege? As an instructor, I would not have facilitated an activity like the one described in the last section, being concerned that in a higher education context students might feel coerced by my authority to be more vulnerable than they wished. What does such an attitude have to do with my being white and female? Positionalities and authority in the classroom. These are areas for further research in the area of animating learning.

Tim Ireland: In a world in which accentuated individuality occupies a central place not only in social and economic relations but also in most recent educational technologies, perhaps investigation on animation will have to concern itself anew with animation's contribution to collective learning and to the construction of common class, ethnic, cultural, religious, gender and race identities.

David Boud: I believe we should develop a literature of working with experience which explores authentic examples of practice within their settings and develops ways of looking at and challenging that practice. This needs to be done not with the aim of deconstruction for its own sake, but with the goal of developing a repertoire of more sophisticated forms of practice in which there is a high-level awareness of threats to integrity and the ways in which context and process distort and reshape what appear to be highly worthwhile educational goals.

Nod Miller: I should like to contribute to the weaving together of theoretical frameworks for creating and understanding auto/biography with accounts of experiential learning and animation. As new technologies become more and more important in our reading, writing, learning and talking to one another, I should like to look forward to more research on, for example, the dynamics of virtual learning communities, by animators and adult educators.

Conclusion

The accounts here, along with those presented in the book, show that different people in different contexts emphasise different elements in their practice. Matters requiring further consideration include: the need to experiment and understand about social change; how to provide conceptual frameworks and opportunities for reflection to move participants beyond a naive understanding of their experience; the importance of listening and respecting the authorship (authority) of learners; the need to disclose and share our emotions to avoid placing the burden of learning on the marginalised and vulnerable; the importance of viewing the promotion of learning through the lens of ethical practice; and respect for the aspirations and integrity of those with whom we work. And finally, perhaps hardest of all, is the challenge of practising what we preach and learning from our own experience as practitioners.

The stories recounted also show a shift of language away from the use of the terms 'teacher' or 'facilitator'. While there may not be any consensus on a preferred term, there is an unease about being identified by titles that are associated with practices which do not sit easily with our own. This is not to say that there is much to acknowledge and celebrate in 'teaching' and 'facilitation', but that perhaps these are too limited conceptions to capture the broad range of practices towards which our diverse contexts and educational endeavours are pushing us. It is necessary to cross borders and break boundaries, not because these activities are ends in themselves, but because none of us can be comfortable with staying at home and ignoring the challenges that context, power, oppression, difference and ethical practice are placing on us.

The symposium aims to open up consideration of these issues further. It will pose the questions:

- what do we need to take account of in the practice of animation?
- what conceptual developments are most helpful in extending the notions we have touched on here?
- what are the key questions we need to examine in order to build a research agenda concerning the promotion of learning from experience?

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Embracing the world: transformative learning, human-earth relations, democracy and the quality of life

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The presenters in this symposium, Darlene Clover, Shirley Follen, Budd Hall and Edmund O'Sullivan are members of the Transformative Learning Centre based at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto in Toronto, Ontario, Canada and associated with the OISE/UT Department of Adult Education, Community Development and Counselling Psychology.

The Transformative Learning Centre (TLC) was created several years ago as a joint university-community space for teaching, research and community action. Conceptually, the TLC exists to bring together approaches to adult learning and local and global change which draw on the theoretical and practical advances being made in feminist education, environmental education, popular education, anti-racism education, 'green' economic activism, indigenous knowledge, peace education and other locations of social movement learning.

Transformative learning does not try to subsume other ways of knowing or learning but supports the strengthening of social movement learning through more intentional sharing of diverse theories and practices. The TLC offers graduate studies at the Masters and Doctoral levels and develops its theoretical and practical work through participatory action research projects with both community and global partners. The ideas presented in this symposium have arisen from work done in partnership with the Growing Jobs Coalition of the Quinte bioregion in Ontario, the Learning for Environmental Action Programme of the International Council for Adult Education, the Healthy Communities Coalition of Ontario, the United Nations Peace University in Costa Rica and with the Unesco Institute for Education of Hamburg, Germany.

Global contexts

The world is not OK. In spite of the glow and the glisten of video images; in spite of the tunes and jingles of a pulsating global market; in spite of virtually unlimited money being spent to sell all aspects of a consumerist vision, most people in the world do not feel that the dominant world economic system works for them. Most people feel less secure now than they did 25 years ago. Taken as whole, the combined machineries of global market domination are, as, Edmund O'Sullivan says, 'a killing machine'. Our symposium contributes to a deeper understanding of transformative learning through the exploration of adult learning within the context of storytelling, ecological autobiography and the recovering of healthy human-earth relations (Darlene Clover), community-based critical environmental adult education practices (Shirley Follen and Darlene Clover), sustainable democracy (Hall) and 'quality of life' education (Edmund O'Sullivan).

Our work together is work in progress towards a full articulation of the theories and practices of transformative learning. We begin and would urge other educators of adults to begin from the understanding that the world is not okay.

Transformative learning and human-earth relations

Darlene Clover notes that contemporary environmental problems have stimulated a call for new educational paradigms which help to transform human/earth relations (for example see Fein 1993; Orr 1992; Deri and Cooper 1993; Hungerford and Volk 1992; Clover 1995). But in order to develop this new paradigm(s) of education, educators will need to understand what the role of memory and past experience play in creating and shaping the relationships humans have (or not) with the rest of nature.

Darlene's work draws on roughly five years experience as an environmental adult education practitioner and theoretician working within Canada and the United States as well as an international network via the International Council for Adult Education's Learning for Environmental Action Programme where she is currently the 'inter-regional' or global co-ordinator. She notes that very little is known about the experiences, feelings and emotions, whether of attraction or fear, people have vis-à-vis the rest of nature. In what ways do these factors create a sense of caring or disconnection between humans and the rest of nature?

Consequently little is known of how these memories and experiences would impact on environmental learning activities. She suggests that a contribution to a more complete framework for transformative learning could be the creation of methodologies that work to draw out the ways in which 'inscape' (the internal patterns and shapes of meaning, emotion and knowledge) affects landscape and our relationship with landscape.

Clover explores the potential of story-telling, memory work and ecological storytelling or ecological autobiography for a transformative learning which places the earth at the centre: earth as teacher and as site of learning. Ecological storytelling, about connections or experiences with the rest of nature, invest the natural world with authority, placing it at the centre along with its listener's past experience and its teller's words.

Her contribution to this symposium shares some of the insights from experiences from two workshops in Canada and one in Australia. She notes that while she has learned much about the variety of experiences, feelings and emotions both positive and negative that adults have towards the rest of nature, she has also learned that nature is not something about which people are indifferent. She says that she still does not completely understand how factors such as religion, upbringing, media and so on have affected how people interact and think about the rest of nature. She quotes from Charlene Spretnak (1989, 7) to underscore the importance of deepening our work with storytelling and memory in the development of transformative learning,

> There are precious movements we need to acknowledge and cultivate...extremely important is a willingness to deepen our experience of communion with nature.

Transformative learning and community revitalisation

Shirley Follen and Darlene Clover combine to report on another dimension of transformative learning. They explore how the adult learning practices of study circles, community workshops and participatory action research can be used within a context of sustainable community revitalization and economic development. The theoretical foundations of this work draw on 'green economics' and feminist economics (Roberts and Brandum 1995; Sachs 1993; Shiva 1992; Waring 1988). The learning theories draw from Darlene Clover on environmental adult education (Clover et al, forthcoming), Anrea Deri and Geoff Cooper on environmental education (Deri and Cooper 1993), John Fien on education and sustainability (Fien 1993), Arnold and Burke on Popular Education (Arnold and Burke 1983), and Veramu and Vio Grossi on adult education and new social paradigms (Veramu 1997; Vio Grossi 1996).

This paper reports on the early stages of a participatory action research project located within the Quinte bioregion, an area roughly two hours North East of Toronto, Ontario on the Northshore of Lake Ontario in the Bay of Quinte-Moira River watershed. The main city in the area is Belleville, a town of about 60,000 persons. The Quinte bioregion was chosen for this project for a variety of reasons. The first is that there are high levels of unemployment or underemployment due to the closure of large plants and factories in the area. Between 1991and 1995 over 2500 jobs were lost to the region. A second reason for working in Quinte is that there are a large number of environmental problems related to past and continuing industrial and agricultural production. The Bay of Quinte was identified by the International Joint Commission for the Great Lakes as one of 43 areas of concern with sever environmental and water quality problems through the North American Great Lakes area lying between Canada and the United States of America. A third reason is that many of the small and medium business have fallen victim to the homogenisation processes of the superstore phenomena such as Walmart, Toys 'R Us, and the Office Place. The final reasons are because there is a relatively high level of environmental consciousness in the community, a history of community environmental activism and high levels of education.

The process of community revitalisation entails increasing community awareness, participatory action research to determine a range of possible green job needs and corresponding community resources and a study circle strategy for community involvement in linking up green job demands with possible sources of support both financial and in kind. Explicit in the shift from top-down old style economic determination to community-based principles of sustainability is a shift from hierarchical to non-hierarchical structures for maximum learning through the various transformative learning processes. The shift is towards a new way of living together which puts the emphasis on making change right where we already live by acting differently in our producing and consuming lives (Dobson 1992).

Follen and Clover clearly see the processes of transformative learning as a key factor for the women and men of the Quinte bioregion to take action to reduce dependence on large scale global economic processes which not only have failed the citizens of this area but have also contributed to the long term environmental degradation of the area's biosphere.

Transformative learning and democracy

Democracy is, among other things, about choice. It is about choice between visions of how we want to live together. It is about the values which we hold to, about the quality and quantity of the relations we have with others or with the earth. It is about learning to create jobs in our communities when the large corporations have closed and moved to another part of the world. It is about workers everywhere having the right to learn. Democracy strengthens our individual and collective capacity to influence decisions which affect our lives. But democracy can be further understood in more varied forms as economic democracy, cultural democracy, ecological or planetary democracy, intellectual democracy or educational democracy. Budd Hall's contribution to the symposium relates to the educational dimensions of the contestation of visions which we experience in our lives. Transformative learning is, among other things, about maintaining possibility. It is about noting that we currently exist within a world where many different ideas about how we might live together seek visibility and champions. There are two Utopian visions at least let loose in the world. At one end of the Utopian continuum is the best known vision of a global market utopia which posits free trade as the solution to all ills. At the other end of the continuum is another much lesser known vision which we might call 'globalisation from below' (Falk 1995). It is Hall's contention that each of these visions imagines or calls into being different forms of adult education. How can democratic theories and practices of adult learning contribute to our understanding of transformative and democratic global society? Budd suggests five actions: 1) the strengthening of an autonomous and independent adult education movement; 2) building new alliances or rebuilding old alliances; 3)keeping the state involved and 4) learning from new agents of change (racial, class, sexuality, ability, indigenous, etc.); 5) contributing to the strengthening of global civil society. Adults learning to change the world have never had more reasons to act.

Transformative learning and the quality of life

Edmund O'Sullivan's contributions to the symposium are derived from a multi-year research and writing project which has as its goal a major conceptual and theoretical contribution to understand both the context for and process of transformative learning. His work draws much inspiration from the work of the US cultural historian and theologian Thomas Berry. According to O'Sullivan the great challenge for us today is to have the courage to embrace the world and bring it into our hearts. Our current problems are not susceptible to easy fixes and solutions.

We in the minority world (sometimes called rich, industrialised or mistakenly 'first') must confront and come to terms with the quality of life that we have created for ourselves and also assume the responsibility of how that manner of living has diminished the manner of living of countless peoples in the majority world. O'Sullivan notes that when people are asked to reflect on those things that are the most important to their lives it is seldom that consumerism or consumption that is mentioned. To be a consumer runs far behind religious practice, conversation, family and community gatherings, theatre, music, dance, poetry, sports, learning or appreciation of nature as something meaningful in one's life.

O'Sullivan maintains that we are living in a period human and earth history that is in a state of radical transformation. Some of our habitual patterns that we have inherited in the past have now become dysfunctional for our present circumstances. We are being driven, by necessity to devise new patterns for living in order to survive in a manner that gives us a sustainable quality of life. We are becoming aware that our western scale of progress and development is not tuned to human scale or for that matter the scale of the earth. Our task must be to deepen our understanding of development in a manner that takes a much wider spectrum of human needs into account.

Transformative learning is that combination of learning which fosters the greatest improvement in people's quality of life. Such a form of learning needs to respond to an understanding of human needs which includes the generation of growing levels of self-reliance, on the construction of organic articulations of people with nature and technology, of global processes with local activity, of the personal with the social, of planning with autonomy, and of civil society with the state (Max-Neef, *et al*).

Towards transformative learning

This symposium can only hope to capture some of the flavour of the conceptual directions and ways of working in which the TLC and others are engaged. We are a group of self-defined scholar activists who are contributing to a deeper understanding of how learning relates to our individual and collective capacities to imagine, to dream and to construct transformed relations among ourselves as humans, between humans and other species and between all life forms and the earth. This symposium is partial, as are all symposia, partial even of the range of theories and practices with which we are trying to work at both a conceptual and a practical level. We celebrate diverse ways of knowing, diverse ways of learning and diverse forms of representation.

There is a profound influence of environmental thought in all our work because we find that the efforts to understand the inclusive, inter-related and integrated fact of planetary life mirror our struggle to understand the inclusive, inter-related and integrated fact of a form of learning that we call transformative. But it is important to note that we are still in need of better ways to incorporate other dimensions of transformative learning related to race for example.

An invitation

We welcome critique, contribution and accompaniment from any interested practitioners, academics, researchers or educators.

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Human-earth relationships: challenges for critical adult learning

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> Education is how we live our lives and how you live with everything around you. Everything in existence teaches us something about life...everything around us educates, how we interact with the land, minerals, trees, sky, animals everything, even our thoughts. Our thoughts too can become a force, for we are in charge of them. (Profeit-LeBlanc 1996, 14)

Contemporary environmental problems have stimulated a call for new educational paradigms which help to transform human/earth relations (for examples see Fein 1993; Orr 1992; Deri and Cooper 1993; Hungerford and Volk 1992; Clover 1995). But in order to develop this new paradigm(s) of education, educators will need to understand what the role that memory and past experience play in creating and shaping the relationships humans have (or not) with the rest of nature.

Research shows that we are shaped by our memories and past experiences which are mediated through factors such as culture and tradition, the media, social structures, gender relations, rural or urban upbringing, race and class. Past experiences play a critical role in developing our values, behaviours, perceptions and the ways we treat other people (Wilson 1996; Evernden 1992). However, according to Ruth Wilson (1996), very little is known about the experiences, feelings and emotions, whether of attraction or fear, people have vis-a-vis the rest of nature, the ways in which these factors create a sense of caring or disconnection and how they shape behaviour. Consequently, little is known of how these memories and experiences would impact on environmental learning activities.

Over the past few years in my role as an educator, I have expanded my visions and work to include an ecological dimension. I have broadened the framework of adult education to include a critical analysis of the root causes of environmental destruction such as the structures and ideologies that have endangered the planet's well being, and help people to learn to connect in more meaningful ways with the rest of nature.

However, each time I walk into a community workshop I realise that the farmers, lawyers, single mothers, community-health care workers, professors, students and politicians who make up the participants, carry diverse perceptions of the rest of nature, shaped and nurtured through past experience, culture and tradition. It is these I do not understand.

Therefore, I suggest that a further development in field of adult education could be the creation of methodologies that work to draw out the ways in which 'inscape', the internal patterns and shapes of meaning, emotion and knowledge, affects landscape.

This paper is a discussion of how storytelling and memory are being used as education and research tools to enhance understanding of 'self and human/earth relations' in community settings.

Storytelling and memory work

> In our society, the stories of ordinary people's relationships to ordinary places remain largely a hidden and untapped resource for understanding the complicated shifting connections between human behaviour and environmental conditions. (Bowerbank 1997, 28)

> One studies stories not because they are true or even because they are false, but for the same reason that people tell and listen to them, in order to learn about the terms on which others make sense of their lives. (Brodkey, quoted in Brookes 1992, 33)

Using people's own stories is a teaching and research tool that is much used by feminist scholars (Brookes 1992). It is used as a method of re-conceptualisation, of exploring one's past experiences and how diverse factors have shaped perceptions, values, attitudes and behaviours.

Traditional education has often carried a bias against storytelling, whether personal or based on myth. Figga Haug (1987, 64) suggests that '[from] our earliest school days, we learn to write 'about' the world, rather than to find a language for the forms *within* which we live.' We have not been able to express our feelings and

> by extension, [we do not] have any means of reassessing or questioning them. We simply reproduce the perceptions we have heard spoken by others, from whose experience they are equally far removed.

Osterland (quoted in Alheit 1995, 285) argues that

> The sociologist as the reader or listener of ... life stories is basically unable to determine whether a description of a past life is of what really happened, or what the subject only imagines his or her past to be. A narrated life history is both past-in-the-present and present-in-the-past. By attempting to reconstruct the memory of the past, it becomes a 'retrospective illusion' determined equally by the past, the present and the future ... Narrated life history thus becomes the presentation of self-image serving to protect the identity of the subject in question, an 'ontology of self', a mythology.

But Alheit argues that although it would be folly to assume that 'people's memories function like a recording device when describing their [own life experiences]', this does not mean that they are merely 'ontologies' of self' nor that memory deceives. He goes on to say that no doubt things such as churches and schools seemed larger when we were children but

> the unspoken consensus of all involved [in autobiography] is that these traditional forms do not promise any 'authentic' information about the life course. At most, they inform us about the social situations in which such forms are used. No one would dream of using them as proof of the un-reliability of remembering. (1995, 11)

Storytelling is one medium through which people can try to make sense of it all. It can enrich people's lives by stimulating imagination, clarifying emotions and analysing the context and influences of past experiences and how they have shaped values, attitudes and behaviours (De Young and Moore 1996; Profeit-Leblanc 1996). It is not about recording facts which have often been re-constructed over time and space, but about feelings, emotions and actions that result from these memories. The fragmentation of memory reflects the that of life.

Berger and Mohr (1982, 285) suggest that

> All stories are discontinuous and based on a tacit agreement about what is not said, about what connects the discontinuities...Neither the teller nor the listener are at the centre of the story: they are at its periphery. Those whom the story is about are at the centre.

Ecological storytelling, about connections or experiences with the rest of nature, would invest the natural world with authority, placing it at the centre along with its listener's past experience and its teller's words.

Inscape are integral to any learning process. How integral are they to shaping landscape and building partnerships with the rest of nature? Can people's stories provide one means or opportunity to unlearn old and re-learn new patterns for more a more harmonious human-earth relationship?

Ecological storytelling in adult education workshops

> The development of a sense of place is an ongoing process. Like genetic material, it is passed on from generation to generation...each encounter with the land adds another layer of depth. It requires more than an experience of sight, sound and smell. It is an inward journey of connections: between people and place, between past and present. (Catherine Gibbon, quoted in Bowerbank 1997, 31)

Over the past year I worked with groups of adults using ecological storytelling. This section outlines the goals and process of the activities, a brief description of some of the experiences or stories people shared and what I and the participants' themselves felt they had learned from engaging in the process.

Coupled with the telling of stories in the workshops that took place in Canada, I had participants use art. Art is a powerful way to communicate messages and feelings. It is widely used by Aboriginal people and feminist educators (Manicom 1988; Gundhumawuy 1995). The three locations described in this paper are Trenton, Ontario; Calgary, Alberta; and Darwin, Australia.

Trenton and Calgary

The primary purposes of the ecological storytelling activities in Trenton (two workshops of two hours each) and Calgary were to use story telling and art to examine past experiences participants have had with the rest of nature; and to understand what this type of educational method meant to participants through a participatory interpretation and evaluation. I was most interested in finding out what the participants' themselves felt was the significance of using art and storytelling as education tools vis-à-vis human/earth relations. Approximately 18 people took part in each workshop and the ages ranged from 25 to 65 (over 90% were at the younger end). All of the participants in the Trenton workshops were women as were about two-thirds of the Calgary participants.

Participants were allocated into small groups and given pieces of flip chart paper and coloured markers. They were then asked to share one significant event or experience they had had with the rest of nature. While sharing the stories they drew an image or picture to represent the story.

Below are brief excerpts of the wide range of ways nature has impacted on people's lives:

> I have a lovely garden and in spite of my efforts, I have discovered that the weeds are there to stay, but I now realise that they too are beautiful and useful and everything has its purpose.
>
> I was out observing Canada geese talking with each other and realised that we must find out what they say, we need to know so we do not destroy them and the earth.
>
> I was walking in the dark in England and experienced fear when approached by an animal only to realise it was because I felt vulnerable and disconnected.
>
> I remember watching a fire and realising how powerful the elements are and that they cannot be contained by humans.
>
> I remember walking on a frozen lake in the winter and feeling the peace and silence.
>
> I was asleep by a river and when I awakened I found myself surrounded by a herd of elk. I felt fear at first but they just moved away.
>
> I feel nature's spirit when I walk along the shores of the lake in my home tow. This is where I draw my spirituality from.
>
> I was cooking once in a camp and had a bear skin

> on my bed. I could feel the presence of the bear and his blood smelt like menstrual blood. There are those in the world who pay homage to the animals they kill and those who just kill.

In order to analyse and interpret the stories and evaluate the learning process, participants were asked to respond to a series of questions once all the presentations had concluded.

The first question posed was what they felt some of the commonalities or common threads in the stories were. The responses revolved around how nature was both big and powerful yet intimate, peaceful and tranquil. Another common theme was how nature holds your attention even when you don't really realise it. The stories also illustrated how 'we revolve around the natural world', and how powerful day-to-day experiences are yet so seldom shared. Others noted that many people had mentioned some type of spiritual or sensual relationship - that it played an important role as a provider of a sense of peace and well being.

A second question asked participants to describe what they felt they had learned from listening to each others' stories. Comments noted things such as how much they had in common, how sensitive and in-tune with nature they were but how often that is forgotten. They also mentioned how interesting and/or fun it was to listen. *We don't really listen to other people* one participant suggested. Other comments revolved around the wonderment and surprises of nature and its enrichment to the soul. Others suggested that they got a sense of nature being everywhere and were inspired by how many times the words 'connecting' and 'spiritual' were used in conjunction with the word nature. Participants noted that they also learned more about the awesome power of nature, the need to respect it more and pay more attention to what is going around them. One participant concluded that

> I learned what I was really thinking. What I learned was that so many of us share mixed feelings of fear and wonder about nature because we forget we are part of it and have a need to be at its side.

Another noted that what she had learned was that

> feelings and emotions are a significant contribution to the learning process and our relationship to nature.

When asked what they felt the significance of using art and storytelling as forms of environmental education were, respondents suggested that it provides a picture that is more permanent and easier to remember, a stronger re-enforcer of our need for nature and was valuable because *it gives an example of how much more is involved in what we say and do than we may realise.* Many felt the pictures were essential because they were a support to the story, *a non-verbal way of portraying their feelings which is not often used.* One participant felt that drawing *lets the child in me speak because I can daydream around the picture.* She also felt that there was a deeper discovery in drawing about nature and self. *The drawings were what made the story unforgettable.* Another participant suggested that there was a vulnerability in trying to draw and tell personal stories, *just like that in our relationship to the rest of nature - this is respect and good learning cause its about taking risks.* Like nature the experiences had colour and using the coloured markers to create the drawings brought that out quite effectively. The drawings somehow enhanced the sensuality of the experience with nature; giving it more dimensions than what the story alone could offer.

The fourth question asked participants to discuss what they felt was the importance of using peoples' experiences and knowledge about their place/nature for community building. Responses were that one needs to have an emotional response and get personally involved which is so often viewed as complicated and difficult but is not. Another felt that getting to know your home was critical because *without it you will never understand the problems there or your own needs.* There was also a suggestion that people's own experiences moved you away from the *someone is going to fix this mentality because it is us and everyone's knowledge that is going to have to fix it.*

This type of educational practice was viewed as important because it is about subjectivity, feelings, emotions, creativity, knowledge, personal and inter-personal experiences with nature. Storytelling is a way of processing as well as a learning experience that opens up space for reflection. Sharing experiences and using art was for one participant *a different way of filtering understanding about out relationship to nature, a more creative and personal way.* One other observation was that there would be great value in keeping a journal because past experiences

> are powerful and transforming, [they fill you with] a sense of awe and although our experiences are often an unused capacity, they are a natural power.

Darwin

The majority of stories shared vis-a-vis the rest of nature in the Trenton and Calgary workshops were positive. However, in September 1996, I conducted a workshop with a group 35 older adults (70 plus) in Australia and was surprised and intrigued to find that in the beginning almost everyone viewed the natural world as a hostile and violent enemy thereby manifesting emotions of fear, anxiety and loathing. The goal of the workshop was the same as it had been in the Canadian workshops but we did not use art due to time and mobility constraints (some of the participants were in wheelchairs or used walkers and the room was too small). There were thirty women and five men. Below are some paraphrased examples of the stories that were shared (I only managed to copy down key words so the sentences have been reconstructed):

> I remember the cyclone that came through and flattened the city. I will never forget the terrifying sound of that wind.
>
> I remember thinking I was watching fireflies back in Estonia while riding with my mother in our buggy but I knew it was too late in the season. When I told my mother to turn and look at the fireflies she began to beat the horses to move faster as the wolves caught up with buggy and rushed at the horses.
>
> It was a terrible rain storm one night and as I was running to close the gate I slipped and fell in the mud. I lay there for a long time because I could not get up. I tore something in my leg and have used a walker ever since.
>
> There was a tidal wave came with that cyclone. A massive wall of water that drowned everything in sight.
>
> I was once caught in a dust storm, my eyes and nose were filled with earth. I felt like a couldn't breath but then suddenly it went away and the night was oh, so clear.
>
> I can recall a horrible thunder storm. I am so scared of thunder and it just kept crashing all night.
>
> I remember swimming out too far once and almost drowning. I just barely made it back to shore because the waves were so high and wild.

Although not all the stories were negative most were. Therefore, when the activity concluded, I focused the group discussion around this negativity.

One woman suggested that the negative stories were because they were *old, and cynical because we have seen too much already.* Another woman suggested (although this is when she came to me after the group conversation) that it was because most of the people their had lost a spouse or partner and they were angry and only thinking of the negative things in their lives.

When I asked the group what they had learned from the process, one participant stated that she had learned *how negative we all are.* She also said I don't know why I did not talk about all the wonderful things that have happened to me in my life. Another mentioned that *I don't know what I learned exactly but you made me feel like a kid again, I got to tell stories and I started to remember things that were good and wished I had shared those instead because they were more important.*

I then questioned them on how this learning experience differed (if at all) from others in the past. Most people agreed that they had never before been asked about their relationship to nature. One woman suggested that

> maybe that was why we were negative. We are disappointed by what we have missed in our education. Nobody ever told me I could tell stories about or even like nature. Sure I was told stories from books, but not my own story!

What was interesting was that when I asked them, based on their stories, if they felt nature should be protected they all agreed it should. In spite of its the negative impact it so obviously has had on your lives I provoked? What came out of this was that people were very aware of environmental issues and that they felt it was important to save the planet - although at this point pessimism returned and one man said it was too late and no one cared anyway. I asked him how much he felt his generation was to blame for this and he said *a lot cause we didn't bother to worry about what we were doing.*

I concluded by asking them if they thought it would be interesting and important to explore more deeply people's relationships to the rest of nature and the factors that influence them and if so why. Everyone agreed yes although many felt there would be no time in people's lives to do this. One man said it was important so *we stop killing each other and this planet.*

The participatory evaluation and reflection on the negative stories helped these older adults to see things in a more positive light. As I left the workshop, I felt that they would continue to muse about their feelings towards the rest of nature and I hope I helped them to assume control of their negative emotions and views. Although this I will never know.

Learning and future challenges

One important outcome of these activities was the knowledge that using storytelling and memory was a powerful experience for all the participants, whether that experience brought out positive or negative feelings. There was absolutely no indifference on the part of any participant towards the rest of nature. It had affected each and every one of them in a variety of ways to which few had given much thought previously. Moreover, it was the first time, particularly in Darwin, that people had the opportunity to explore their feelings and emotions about the rest of nature. Has an educational system that has failed to examine these relationships been partly responsible for the crisis of today?

Participants themselves saw this as an important educational tool and one from which people could better learn about their own experiences and feelings about the rest of nature. Many felt that more time should be spent on this type of activity. In fact, a deeper analysis of human-earth relationships would come if the storytelling process could take place over an extended period. More questions that probe into the participant's background such as their religious background, where they were born (urban or rural), and what science classes and/or their parents had taught them about nature. In addition, more experiences at different stages in their lives could be explored in order to better understand how their present relationship compares with those of previous stages of development in their lives.

It appears that the younger adults felt closer and/or had a more sensual or spiritual relationship to the rest of nature. Is this because the younger generation is more secular or is it because they are more aware of environmental issues? Is it because they are less cynical and have seen less? This is something that could be explored through storytelling if they were shaped around a variety of deeper personal background questions. It would also be interesting to discover more about what they felt they had *learned* from nature and in what ways they had been taught.

What I discovered that was most interesting from the Darwin workshop, which now appears obvious but not at the time, was that I was asking people to tell stories about relationships; felt and lived connections. If somehow a relationship has been painful or destructive, memory lumps them together. Also, before beginning a dialogue about nature the good, you had better be prepared for nature the bad!

Some people say that negative learning is more powerful than positive learning. Although at one time I might have disagreed, after the Darwin workshop it is something I would like to explore further. Although all the participants of the Canadian workshops were effected by the activity (as displayed in both the oral and written responses) the changes that took place in Darwin in participants feelings, and the movement from the negative stories to the positive analysis was most inspiring.

I have learned a great deal about the variety of experiences, feelings and emotions, whether positive or negative, that adults of varying ages have towards the rest of nature. I have also learned that nature is not something to which people are indifferent. But what I still do not completely understand is how factors such as religion, upbringing, media and so on have affected how people inter-act and think about the rest of nature. I also do not know exactly how engaging in the process of storytelling will impact on people's future behaviour toward the rest of nature. Only deeper more extended explorations will provide incite into these areas.

The participatory analysis of the stories shared in the workshops in Trenton, Calgary and Darwin, show that storytelling is a powerful tool for analysing past experiences and gaining wisdom and knowledge from others.

What has been missing in my environmental education work was a process to better understand human-Earth perceptions and experiences and how they affect our attitudes and behaviours. The workshops have given me some insight into this, but there is much work still to be done. As Charlene Spretnak (1989, 7) notes

> There are precious movements we need to acknowledge and cultivate....extremely important is a willingness to deepen our experience of communion with nature.

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Community revitalisation through critical environmental adult education

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Green economists argue that the existing global economic system is unsustainable, based on maximisation of profits, excessive use of resources and world wide homogenisation. Feminist economists argue that there is a further major problem with the global economic system which has been ignored: women are not counted, nor is the use and misuse of the environment in the global economic reckoning, the GNP or DNP. The system is not working, neither in social terms nor in environmental terms and the well-being of the entire planet is at risk. (For examples see Waring (1988); Daly and Cobb (1989); Dobson (1993); and Roberts (1993)). The increasing social and environmental decay, and global systemic homogenisation demands that solutions are found to the root economic causes of environmental and social degradation.

The Quinte bioregion is a classic example of these predictions and outcomes. Quinte is an area which has experienced significant economic structural changes over the past five years. As an area of relatively well established industrial production dating back to the earliest European settlement of Ontario, the region has seen a sharp rise in unemployment as a result of NAFTA and other globally related shifts. At the same time, in part due to patterns of land misuse and industrial production, it experiences high levels of environmental degradation. The Quinte region is also an area with relatively high levels of citizen mobilisation on environmental and social fronts, but like many other communities, groups often work in isolation and independently, without connecting and thus strengthening their efforts. Almost all attempts to develop 'green jobs' have been difficult to implement and ultimately unsustainable.

The purpose of this paper is to briefly examine existing ideas about the development of greener, more self-reliant and sustainable communities and the role of education to strengthen this process. The paper outlines the elements of a project titled *Growing Jobs for a Living Through Environmental Adult Education.* The basic premise of this project is that education and participatory action research, linked to struggles to democratise structures and processes, are key to developing a healthier and sustainable community. It is a process of reflection and action which builds knowledge, awareness, cohesiveness, and skills in order to create a stronger foundation for community transformation.

Community economic development and the concept of sustainability

Evidence of increasing social and environmental decay and homogenisation comes in the forms of heavier pesticide use, escalating crime rates and deforestation, higher unemployment, an increase in mega-malls and fast food outlets, more building over productive farmland, destruction of fishing industries, an increased dependence on imports from other countries and the manifestation of environmental illnesses. All of these problems are a result, as argued by a number of authors, of the existing global economy which is based on high productivity and resource use and large-scale economic competition and trade (for examples see Marilyn Waring (1989); Wayne Roberts (1992); Vandana Shiva (1989); Ross Dobson (1993); Wolfgang Sachs (1993); John Fien (1992); Ellie Perkins (1996); and Joseph Veramu (1997)). These authors believe that what is needed to combat these problems is a new model of economics; a 'home-grown' model that creates local employment, halts environmental degradation, addresses social problems from within the community, gives communities control over major political and economic decision-making and impedes further erosion of local identity and cultural diversity brought about by homogenous values.

This new model of economics would focus on building strong economic alternatives that have the

> potential to limit the growth and extension of globalised trade ..., represent a fundamental challenge to the juggernaut of globalisation ... (and) hold the seed of more fundamental economic transformation. (Perkins 1996, 12)

It would revolve around the concept of community economic development,

> small-scale, highly self-sufficient town, suburban and rural economies in which all the world's people can have a perfectly adequate material living standard and high quality of life on very low per capita levels of resource use ... This means living simply, that is without affluence and waste, reducing transport and especially international trade.(Fien 1993, 18)

Achieving this new model would mean *learning* (or re-learning) how to live more lightly on the land, within nature's rhythms and not outside them, and generate local work opportunities that are ecologically sound and sustainable.

But what does sustainablility mean, particularly in reference to environmental problems and employment and how do people learn to create more healthy and sustainable communities? What are the opportunities, skills and tools needed to bring about this monumental task of transformation to sustainability?

Sustainability

In the article, *Recovering the Real Meaning of Sustainability*, Vandana Shiva (1992, 187) ponders the term 'sustainability'. She plants its root in the term 'sustain', which means to support, bear the weight of, hold up, enable to last out, give strength to, endure without giving way. Vandana Shiva argues that sustainability should involve a recovery of the recognition that nature supports our lives and livelihoods and is the primary source of sustenance. Suzana Padua (1992, 14) suggests that *sustainability implies changing values and setting new priorities*.

It would mean supporting women who have and will continue to play a critical role in the struggle to save the planet, to create healthy communities, mainly as non-paid, non-employed advocates for social justice and environmental preservation.

It would mean redefining the idea of community and recreating a living community which is self-replicating, self-reliant and semi-autonomous, at least in basic needs satisfaction, *a model diametrically opposite to the world market economy we now inhabit and seek to enlarge*. (Dobson 1993, 2)

It would also mean harnessing collective energy drawn from a coalition of residents, volunteers, activists and community groups. Community power is a power shared among many and its strength lies in the horizontal connections among many people and many groups: *key processes are networking, partnerships, co-operation and interdependence* (Nozick 1992, 105).

There are numerous examples of community economic solutions that have been developed across Canada (see Marcia Nozick (1992); Wayne Roberts (1992 and 1995); Ross Dobson (1993)). To date, however, there are still few models of sustainable communities and for those that exist, there has been little or no documentation of how people actually *learned* their way there. Most often individual 'ecopreneurs' come up with their own solutions but these have not resulted in widespread transformation. They are bright progressive squares of new material in an old threadbare quilt. Some of the cloth is different, but the basic weave is still the same. Fien argues that all too often these projects end up being little more than the hobby obsession for a small minority and make little or no contribution to educating people in general about the need for a sustainable society. He suggests that *it is the educating and explaining that is crucial not the establishment of more community gardens* (1993, 20).

Perhaps what is needed is a stronger more effective education process to bring about substantial or fundamental changes in the way in which a community operates. This would mean engaging in a learning process that examines the root causes of problems in the community in order to be able to take more informed and effective action, a process that is critical, creative and action-oriented, which can mediate change towards local self-reliance and sustainability.

The role of education

Agenda 21 (1992, 36.3) of the United Nations emphasises

> education as a critical tool which can improve the capacity of the people to address environmental and social issues and suggests that both 'formal and non-formal education are indispensable to changing people's attitudes so that they have the capacity to assess and address their own needs and concerns'.

Moreover, other education policy documents and related writings suggest that in order to challenge existing social and ecological problems, argued by John Bellamy Foster (1994) to be one and the same, new paradigms of education are required.

The formal school system is quite successful in producing a society which has a destructive competitive/consumer mentality. To create a new society replacing the systemic destructiveness, a transformed formal education system is needed to produce critical thinkers able to link consumerism with environmental degradation and social degradation, with a power and potential to take action toward change (see David Orr 1992). However, time is against waiting for the outcomes of a transformed formal education system. As it is the adults who make the political, social and economic decisions, their education or re-education is also a critical issue. To date, adult education has generally been limited to preparing adults for new jobs, a 're-skilling' process. New emphasis needs to be placed on their education and learning, the process, content and goals.

This means a shift towards an adult education the goal of which is societal transformation within an environmental context. The basic call is for an environmental education that is

- critical in its examination of the root causes of the environmental crisis;
- makes links between environmental and other social issues;
- is learner centred, experiential and fun;
- begins with people's own experiences, drawing on their potential to solve existing environmental and social problems;
- makes links between the local and global issues and impacts;
- encourages connections with the natural

world;

- understands the inter-connectedness of life and where humans fit into the web;
- recognises, encourages and works with diversity among adults;
- stimulates critical reflection, evaluation and co-operation;
- and results in the development of concrete actions, personal but particularly, collective; (see David Orr 1992; Andrea Deri and Geoff Cooper 1992; NIACE 1993; Victor Ibikunle-Johnson and Edward Rugumayo 1987; Michael Cohen 1989; Francisco Vio Grossi, 1995).

This adult education like feminist and popular education is a philosophy, concept and method of teaching and learning that has been developed to encourage adults to see themselves as key actors who have the capacity to assess and address their own needs and bring about change. These educational practices provide the opportunity for adults not only to dream of possibility but take action towards social transformation (Rick Arnold and Bev Burke 1983; Darlene Clover 1995). They start from people's own locations, encourage action, are creative and experiential, and develop critical thinking skills. Moreover, through the work of feminist educators, they have been required to include the knowledge and needs of others who have been marginalised due to race, class and ability, and to recognise that women's knowledge and experiences are important and must be taken into account.

These practices have effectively made links between various social issues such as poverty and health and local and global issues. More recently they have been re-shaped to include the rest of nature in their analysis of marginalisation and oppression, to incorporate the rest of nature into the pedagogical methodology as a teacher and site of learning, and to encourage people to make links between environmental and social issues.

If these types of education have been used as tools to challenge unjust power relations and bring about change, why could they not be used to create sustainable livelihoods and reduce a community's dependency on large corporations and imported goods? As John Fien (1992, 19) suggests

> change comes gradually and there is evidence that it is occurring already, but we will not make significant progress until most people come to understand the unsustainable nature of our society, the need for a society of this kind, and how satisfactory it could be to (learn to) live in such a society.

Achieving this goal would mean actively developing and fostering the educational component of any community development activity. It would mean creating the opportunity for women and men to come together to discuss issues and visions, debate current economic practices and learn together to change their communities.

Growing jobs for a living

> I believe this community can solve its problems... The days of government providing these things are long gone. It's time to go back to the days when we did these things ourselves. *Ross McDougall, The Intelligencer, Belleville, Ontario.*

As mayor of the City of Belleville, a major centre of the Quinte area, Ross McDougall reflects the reality of many Canadian communities, a reality shared by communities globally. Governments are retreating from providing economic support to solve the many complex problems communities face as a result of NAFTA, downsizing, and outsizing and cutbacks. 'Handouts' are no longer available and communities are being forced to find grass-roots solutions.

A goal of the project, *Growing Jobs for a Living*, is to increase community self-reliance and the capacity of individuals and community-based organisations to address problems of unemployment and environmental degradation by involving people from all sectors of society in an educational process that is critical, creative and action-oriented.

The Quinte bioregion was chosen for this project for a variety of reasons. The first is that there are high levels of unemployment or under-employment due to the closure of large plants and factories; from 1991-1995, over 2500 jobs were lost in the Quinte region. The second is that it has a number of serious environmental problems related to past and continued industrial and agricultural production. The Bay of Quinte was identified by the International Joint Commission for the Great Lakes as one of 43 areas of concern with severe environmental and water quality problems throughout the Great Lakes. A third reason is that many of the small, local businesses, in the centres of cities or towns, have fallen victim to the homogenisation process of superstores such as Walmart, Toys R US and The Office Place. A final reason is that although numerous people have begun efforts around green job creation and have produced ideas for ecological clean up, many of these initiatives have failed or proven to be unsustainable. Based on the above, and particularly on the failure of so many initiatives, *Growing Jobs for a Living* has been designed to include a strong education component which addresses the crisis through a variety of methods as discussed above.

Sustainability, as mentioned earlier, can only be achieved through communities attaining control over their resources, their consumption, production and their knowledge base. As argued by Marcia Nozick, community control means that the decision-making processes and organisational structures within a community are especially designed to give all members of a community the power and means to manage their own affairs. Required is a transformation from *hierarchical to nonhierarchical structures so as to allow for the maximum participation by community members in the decision making and development process* (1992, 99). Similarly, it is argued by Dobson that communities must become economically self-reliant and he suggests that does not mean complete isolation to create utopian communities; *we can do it right from where we already live, merely by acting differently in our producing and consuming lives.* This project encourages acting differently through education and discovering other ways.

Also important is raising awareness of issues such as the role and place of women in this search for sustainability and self-reliance. Marilyn Waring, in her book *If Women Counted*, makes a resounding indictment of our present economic system in that the foundation, the women and their unpaid production and reproduction are invisible to it. Through documenting this invisibility, she raises awareness to the exclusivity of the System of National Accounts (an international system of economic measurement) and the effect of only cash generating activities being taken into account to ensure that countries can determine balance of payments and loan requirements — not as a comparative exercise, but as a controlling exercise.

They are interested only in seeing the cash generating capacity of the debtor countries, not their productive capacity. But whatever the motive, those who are making the decisions are men, and those values which are excluded from this determination are those of our environment, and of women and children. (Waring, 3)

The educational component of the *Growing Jobs for a Living* project will include the reality of this exclusion and the importance of finding alternatives.

The imbalance between the participation of women and men in unpaid efforts to foster healthy sustainable communities is also an important consideration in the design of the project. In industrialised counties a major change has taken place in the voluntary or non-profit sector with the re-emphasis on the word 'volunteer': the non-paid, non-employed advocate who works tirelessly either due to the inability to find paid work, a deep belief in social justice, and/or their survival. And it is the women who are the major players reflecting the global situation where women are *the backbone of virtually every environmental/social change group around the world. With few exceptions, women constitute approximately 60 to 80 percent of the membership of most environmental organisations* (Seager 1993, 263-4) and initiate the majority of voluntary struggles and actions taking place around the world (Seager 1993; Fisher 1993). Women are the organisers at the grassroots, national and global levels and their efforts reflect a creative attempt to stop the continued degradation of the human life support system and build a more just and equitable society (Plant (1993); Dankelman (1988). A major goal of the project will be to deal with this imbalance and invisibility while supporting the idea that women's knowledge and experiences are important and must be taken into account in order to bring about true social change.

The following are education methods incorporated into the project design. The first method is study circles. Study circles, a concept originating in Sweden, are widely used by adult educators as a space

> to explore important topics, consider a range of viewpoints, challenge commonly held assumptions, and achieve learning that enables people to take constructive action. The essence of the study circle is free discussion and exploration with all views being valid. (Graham Green, in Clover *et al.* forthcoming)

Study circles are particularly useful for dealing with difficult social and political issues and strengthening the skills necessary for community participation and action. Green suggests eight principles of the study circle:

- equality and democracy — the exchange of views in a relaxed manner
- liberation — proceeding from participants' experiences and knowledge
- co-operation and companionship-security and sharing of progress and setbacks
- freedom and right to set objectives to suit the needs of the group
- continuity and planning — by agreement, without fixed limits
- active participation — people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process
- printed study material — provided to all participants
- change and action — empowered and inspired to take action

A series of study circles will be organised to help women and men to critically examine social and economic barriers to development, sustainable employment and healthy community living.

A second method will be participatory research workshops. Participatory research (PR) is an integrated activity that combines social investigations, educational work, and action. It is a three-part process of knowledge creation and an approach to personal and social transformation. PR puts emphasis on participation, critical analysis, and personal and collective knowledge. Rather than merely recording observable facts as in more traditional, dominant social science research approaches, PR has the explicit intention of collectively investigating reality in order to transform it. PR is a method of conducting a research project that helps ordinary people understand the connections between their individual experience and the broader social, economic, and political struggles. It stresses the involvement of participants in the entire research process including an action phase. The process of participatory research creates a greater awareness among the people of their own resources, as well as how they can mobilise for action. As the key actors in change are involved in the decision making process, they have an investment in and commitment to the proposed changes. The community takes ownership of the recommendations and the action taken towards creating sustainable employment and solving social problems.

In the workshops, women and men from a wide sector range will use their imaginations, creativity and problem solving skills to identify a variety of sustainable or 'green' jobs which are needed in their communities and the financial, human and in-kind resources available to support these green jobs. In addition to these workshops, researchers will individually interview women and men in the community who are unwilling or unable to participate in the workshop process in order to obtain their input. As well as providing a healthy learning component, and an inventory of jobs and resources, a final outcome is an implementation plan to bring needs and resources together.

Conclusion

It is becoming increasingly obvious that the global economic system in place today is neither sustainable, nor has the mandate or intention of raising the quality of life of a vast majority of the world's citizens. In fact, as Ellie Perkins (1996, 10) argues, the benefits of this large-scale economic competition and import/export system *have been very unequally distributed and have come at a huge environmental and social cost* (Perkins 1996, 10).

The number of alternative economic initiatives taking place across Canada as identified by Wayne Roberts, Marcia Nozick and Ross Dobson, show that communities are attempting to take matters into their own hands as they have lost faith in government to create jobs and solve their growing social and environmental problems. The notion of Green Job Creation represents an important alternative to the consumer driven global industrial production trends which are being experienced all across Canada. However, these solutions and efforts are often piecemeal and have failed to produce any lasting transformation on a large-scale such as a community.

If education is an effective way to build momentum and create change then perhaps a stronger, more intensive and inclusive education process is what is needed to encourage bonding among people, provide a stronger sense of continuity and identity and *create environments and opportunities for people to interact with each other in meaningful ways* (Nozick 1992, 12). *Growing Jobs for a Living* is a project that sees education as a key agent of change. Through study circles, workshops, interviews and participatory research, the project combines locally generated environmental research findings with job needs through a process of community revitalisation. Building public awareness and support by including people from all sectors of society into the educational process is essential before any significant change is possible.

Many have become overwhelmed by the power and rhetoric of the global economy, by the environmental crisis facing the earth, but there are solutions and the role of education is important to 'learning our way out'.

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'Race' and 'ethnicity' in adult education: issues of power and diversity

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The last decade has seen an increase in the number of Black students of African, Asian and Caribbean descent entering Further (FEIs) and Higher Education (HEIs) institutions. The percentage of Black students entering HEIs has steadily increased from 8.5% in 1991-1992 to 9.8% in 1993-1994 (UCCA 1992, UCAS 1994, 1995). This increase has been built on the success of the Black Access programmes in FE colleges; the Community Education programmes and Literacy Campaigns; the recognition and implementation of Accreditation of Prior Learning Experiences in HEIs; the creation of flexible modes of learning, teaching and assessment in HEIs; and the implementation of positive action programmes by HEIs to widen the cultural diversity of students and to increase the intake of mature students with non-standard entry qualifications. The increase in Black students in HEIs has brought new challenges which require HEIs to review their policies and practices in order address the issues of institutional racism and to meet the needs of a dynamic and culturally diverse student intake.

The strategy of increasing access and participation of working-class, women, and Black students, and other groups that have been previously denied the opportunity to study in HEIs, is a welcome development. However widening access also means that HEIs need to have a commitment to meeting the needs of a culturally diverse student intake. A leading Black educationist, Petronnella Breinberg (1987) suggests that 'Black people while welcoming the increase in access and participation of Black students, are however, more concerned with what happens when Black students enter HEIs'. The experiences of Black students in HE is frequently characterised by lack of quality treatment or of equality of treatment (Bird 1996). Many HEIs pride themselves over the numbers of Black students they recruit and the cultural, racial, and sexual diversity of their student intake. However, 'many have not acknowledged, recognised or responded positively to the many challenges that Black students bring to HEIs'. It is the teaching staff, the personal tutors and supervisors, those people at the front line of the profession, who are left to deal with the academic and cultural demands of Black students, and they are being asked to deal with it with limited training, resources and staff, and to deal with it the best way they can.

This raises issues of power, and who holds power within the HEIs and within each learning environment, how that power is used, and how the use of that power affects the attitudes, perceptions and performance of Black students. The debate on increasing access to Black students also raises issues about knowledge, what knowledge and whose knowledge is taught in HEIs. Black students bring a diverse range of historical traditions, ontological positions, cultures, languages, values, and belief systems to HEIs. To what extent are these incorporated in most course structures? These are some of the questions that will be raised in this short paper. These questions become more relevant when viewed in the context of the fact that the majority of teaching staff in HEIs are still predominantly white, male and middle class.

Research methods

In the design of the research, it was planned that 25 white academic staff and 100 Black students from London, Sheffield, Manchester and Huddersfield HEIs would be interviewed. This was slightly ambitious given the time constraints, so what appears here is part of a larger on-going study to be completed at a later date. So far only eight white academic staff were interviewed. The small sample reflects the small number of staff with direct experience of teaching or supervising Black students. A structured interview schedule was designed. Thirty-two questionnaires were completed by Black students, 18 were face to face interviews and 14 were completed by students themselves. The gender balance was 18 males and 14 females, 28 were undergraduate and four were post-graduate students. In terms of age group 29 were mature students over 21 years of age and three were under 21 years of age. Seven students had entered their courses as mature students after gaining work experience. Seventy percent of the students interviewed were pursuing their respective courses for career reasons, they saw education as giving them better opportunities to secure employment, and enhancing their career prospects.. Most of the students interviewed preferred to be called Black rather than any other term, because this term expressed their *collective* *experiences of racism* in the UK. While the authors of this paper recognise that different ethnic groups have different education needs, however, in line with many other studies (Bird 1995; Foster 1990; Leicester and Taylor 1992; Moodley, 1995; Showunmi and Constantine-Simms 1996). All the Black students interviewed had direct experience of racism in the education system, and that from their experience racism applied to all them irrespective of their ethnic background.

There is a growing amount of debate and controversy concerning research on Black communities (Foster 1990; Leicester and Taylor 1992; Bird 1995; Moodley 1995; Showunmi and Constantine-Simms 1996). This debate raises a range of ethical and political issues, whether research on Black communities should be occurring at all? If so who should fund such research? Who should be carrying out such research? We were conscious of the fact that Black students may be feeling, 'Oh no! Not another research study on us, again...'. The research was conducted by four HE practitioners, three are Black and one is white. As much as possible, the research is written from a Black perspective, and emphasis was put ensuring that the voices of Black students were heard. All the researchers are members of the Multicultural Group within SCUTREA which exists to address these issues and to ensure that the voices of Black practitioners, students and communities are recorded and published.

The barriers to equality of opportunity

Students were asked to describe their experiences within the school, FE and HE sector and to highlight specific incidences they felt were pertinent to their learning. Over 75% of all the Black students who were interviewed expressed negative school experiences, where teachers and Careers officers were not expecting them to pass their GCSE and A Levels and proceed to University, where they were encouraged to take up sports, placed in lower streams and non-exam classes etc, (Rampton 1981; Scarman 1982; Swann 1986; Eggleston 1986) as illustrated by the comment of this student:

> When I told my Careers Officer that I wanted to go to University, he looked at me in complete and utter amazement, as if to say — are you sure you are all right? (Female: third year English Studies student)

Students still talk with anger and bitter regret when they recalled their past school experiences:

> My general experience in the education system .... (pauses and thinks for a while) ... you see the thing is that teachers and lecturers did not give me enough attention, they did not understand my cultural and academic needs, I just was not taken seriously. It's like I was there just to fill in the numbers, but my history, my cultural background, my language, and my whole being as a Black young person growing up in Britain was seen as insignificant. I know its sounds odd to say this, but it is very painful to be present in those situations and yet be invisible. It is a very painful experience, considering the effort it takes for a Black student to jump all the hurdles of schooling just to get to University. (Male: second year Social Science student)

Fifty percent of students found that even where the school curriculum tried to address the experiences of Black people in Britain and the world, the subject content was very shallow, that it was taught from a Eurocentric perspective, and that the knowledge and experiences of Black students in class or Black people with such knowledge within the community were not utilised. As a result most students saw these lessons as *marginal, not important, and not subject to the same academic rigor as other subject areas.* For example, three students: *found it quite frustrating to study A Level British History with limited exploration of the exploitation of Black people and their contribution to the British economy.*

This view was confirmed by white lecturers who identified a range of problems faced by Black students in HE. These included:

> ... negative experiences of previous schooling (particularly in terms of low teacher expectations), difficulties in discovering themselves or their identities owing to curricula being insufficiently inclusive of their cultural, social and historical background, and racism both from academic staff within HE and within placement organisations.

Some students saw the problems they experienced as emanating from the structural changes in the funding arrangements brought by the HEFC:

> At the University there is very little time when tutors have one-to-one relationship with students. In some cases the personal tutorial system has been completely cut off. This has created difficulties for Black students who would have benefited from the support and guidance that the personal tutorial system used to offer. This also would be a time when Black students would voice their problems and share their experiences, and at times would change the tutor's attitude and behaviour in the way they viewed and treated Black students. That opportunity has been lost. (Male: third year Computing Studies student)

One of the major barriers to equality of opportunity in HEIs for Black students is the pervasive nature of institutional racism. Whilst most HEIs have Equal Opportunities policies, however the experiences of Black students show that racism exists in its most subtle forms. Sometimes the language of HEIs mission statements gives the impression that there is no problem of racism, and therefore it is not a serious topic of debate. After all how can liberal institutions discriminate when liberals do not, by self definition, discriminate? (Bird 1995). The reality for Black students is that covert racism is a common feature of their life, and that this makes it difficult to tackle racism, as the comment of this student suggests:

> The racism in this institution is very subtle. Sometimes the racism I am talking about is not even apparent to some Black students. It is certainly not always apparent to white students or lecturers. At times when you mention that you have experienced racism, white friends and lecturers turn round and look surprised as if to say, how could you say such a thing, when we have been with you most of the time and we have not seen you experiencing racism. That's how subtle that racism is. As a result to be honest some Black students don't bother to raise issues of racism because it appears that you are just nit-picking and being petty. (Female: first year mature student: Science course)

Most Black students commented that the racism that they experienced on a day-to-day basis was being marginalised not only by white academics but by the liberal ethos in most HEIs that makes it difficult for both staff and students to discuss the issues of unequal treatment of Black students (Dorn 1991).

One area of general misunderstanding was when white female staff tried to make connections between racism and other forms of oppression, and in particular sexism. Interviews with white staff showed that several had introduced the issue of gender, perhaps an inequality of which they had more direct understanding or experience. One male respondent found that issues of sexuality presented more difficulties than issues of racism. There was indication that white women staff attempted to use their understanding of gender and experience of sexism to try to understand and raise the issue of racism. Black students on the other hand whilst acknowledging the relevance of finding common threads in other forms of oppression, they felt that sometimes white feminists did this to minimise issues of racism under discussion:

> White female lecturers talk about solidarity between feminists and anti-racists, I am not quite sure whether they are serious about this or just playing a game. I do not want someone to come and empathise with my plight and yet they do not challenge the racist and sexist practices that pervade the institution. Why is it that I am the only Black woman on the course, and why is it that all the research students in this department are white? This is no coincidence you know, and where is the solidarity there? The way I look at it, solidarity has to be put in practice, we cannot say one thing and yet be seen to be doing nothing about some of the oppressive practices that Black students have to put up with in these institutions. (Female: third year Women Studies course)

This view was reinforced by another female student in a different course. This leads us to believe that these views are not isolated incidences, but are common experiences of Black students in most courses.

> What I found at times very upsetting and frustrating was that whenever there was a heavy discussion about the experiences of Black students or Black people in general with white female lecturers, invariably that subject would be quickly switched to a related or distant issue on gender or sexism. I am a positive Black woman, I know that sexism pervades most of these institutions. Issues of gender and sexism are very closely linked, but I strongly object to the way that debates or discussions on racism tend to be high-jacked and thus marginalised , and yet issues of racism are very important to all Black students. (Female: third year Social Science course)

One of the constant themes mentioned by Black students and white staff is the need for HEIs to employ more Black staff. A statement made by one student summarises the feeling that the majority of the Black students felt.

> Universities from my experience are a facade of neutrality in dealing with the racial inequalities. Firstly, there are far too few Black academics on the teaching staff. White teachers learn about racism from text books, they don't live it, they hear and read about it. This is very frustrating as it leaves (once again) little room for the experiences of Black students to be brought into the debate.

It is over the attitudes and behaviour of white staff that Black students were most vociferous. This varied from not being taken seriously as students to having no Black expression within the curriculum. The theme of limited understanding and in some cases total lack of sensitivity of Black experience and reality ran through all the responses. Most Black students felt that white lecturers *were playing a game* with anti-racism, they were not convinced that most white academic staff fully understand the nature, extent and negative effects that racism had on Black students, as illustrated by the comments of the following student:

> I cannot count how many times I have sat in lectures or seminars and heard white lecturers talking and lecturing about racism and yet they themselves are act in a racist manner and are unable to deal with or confront their own racism. (Male: third year: Humanities)
>
> Frankly I am sick and tired of being told that I

> should act like any other student in this institution by white staff who don't understand what I am going through. I am not asking for favours, but when I have a legitimate request for something that I feel is culturally relevant to me and I am entitled to, lecturers should not accuse me of wanting special treatment. I don't want special treatment, all I want is that my point of view is heard and that my request is acknowledged, that is all. (Female: first year: Economics)
>
> They did not express their racist comments in my presence, and that was very hypocritical of them. But some white students told me of racists statements made about myself or other Black students in my absence. Some comments made by lecturers suggested that my presence on the course was not particularly welcomed. That's how it makes you feel. (Female: second year: Business Studies)

There were frequent references to racist attitudes and practices by white lecturers, over 50% cited having racist lecturers and in four cases there were verbal and physical confrontations with staff, and Black students saw these confrontations not as isolated incidents but as everyday occurrences:

> While lecturers think of racism as an academic subject, to them it's another theoretical concept to be analysed and deconstructed, there is nothing wrong with that. But the difference here is that we live it and experience it everyday, it is not just a theoretical concept that appears in and reappears in lectures and seminars. We live it daily. When sometime we remind those lecturers that what they have just said or done is racist by definition if not by intent, they become very sensitive. They forget that they cannot be immune from the history of imperialism, colonialism, slavery, etc. That needs to be acknowledged, otherwise they will never realise the amount of racism that has been passed on to them by accident of history. (Male: Post-graduate: Social Work course).

White lecturers working in a range of contexts in HE institutions were asked about their experience of working with Black students. The lecturers' work included dissertation supervision, lecturing, placement supervision and acting as personal and course tutors. Only a quarter of respondents had had any anti-racist training and none had been provided by their current HE employers. One had received training *once or twice in ten years, but issues of race became difficult in the staff team.* A second had been responsible himself for *setting up a useful anti-racist training session.*. However, others had received training when working in FE or youth and community work. Opinions concerning appropriate responses to issues of racism extended along a continuum from assimilation through integration to pluralism. The curriculum itself was seen to be Eurocentric and the contribution of Black people to world development usually ignored completely or scant references were made to this. One lecturer stated, *I think Black students should be treated like any other students*, and added, *I believe that any special treatment solely for Black students would be counter productive and perhaps risk creating resentment where none previously existed.* However another suggested, *in teacher training there's no recognition that Black students are being trained for a different job to white students* and explored how courses could be designed to address the issue. Students therefore encounter not only academics who consider an assimilationist approach to be successful and desirable but also those who believe there is potential for a radical pluralist approach to course design and, indeed, to the epistemologies underpinning courses. This latter approach would serve to redress the current cultural construction of HE, identified by one white lecturer as *unwelcoming to Black students and communicating the message that they were there as a concession rather than as a right.*

Students were asked if there were issues of racism that they experienced in doing their dissertations and essays, and for 21 students lack of Black authors on most of their reading lists was a big issue, and in many cases Black students thought that *the white lecturers did not even think this was an issue.* For nine students the fact that many of the essays they had to write had nothing to do with Black experiences itself showed the lack of understanding and lack of sensitivity of the white academic community towards the concerns and indeed academic needs of Black students. The issue of dissertations was felt very strongly by third year and post-graduate students, who felt that they were not given a choice of a supervisor, and that in most cases they would have preferred a Black supervisor. Most students found that their white supervisor had limited knowledge and understanding of Black history, and that they found themselves educating the white professional, a view expressed by one third Year student:

> I am here to learn, and of course to share my own experiences too, but when you find yourself with a supervisor who has not got a clue of Black issues, and you are spending most of your valuable time in tutorials educating this tutor, I feel used and exploited. What makes me mad is that at times I myself am not sure of those issues too, and would really need someone to challenge or extend my knowledge.

Staff, meanwhile, were wary of challenging Black students for fear of accusations of racism. When dealing with certain aspects of students' performance and of the curriculum, white lecturers encountered a degree of resistance from some Black students, rooted in 'white/Black dynamics of mistrust'. This, it was suggested, could be exploited by some Black students; *if a white university is part of the problem, I don't need to explore why I am not learning or making progress.* For example, one respondent met resistance to a critical analysis of Black history including *a strong reaction to any criticism of African countries' human rights records'.* For two students there were issues of racism in their work placements which were not dealt with by the academic staff. In one of these cases the student felt that they were,

> being treated as guinea pigs by the lecturer as the lecturer only observed my reactions without providing support or challenging racism, they made copious notes as I spoke but nothing came out of it in the end.

For three students they felt that they had been placed in public sector institutions and yet white students usually had a choice between public and private sectors. The HEIs concerned did not challenge these racist practices, and as such were seen by these Black students to be colluding with the racist practices prevalent in the private sector. Another issue was that the treatment of Black students in seminars, for some students they felt that when it came to seminars and group work white tutors spent more time talking , listening and explaining to white students than Black students. During group work white lectures spent very little time or even missed out groups made up of Black students, and according to this student — '*they don't even realise that they are doing it'.* Another major issue raised by Black students was the feeling of being the lone Black student in courses, and the feeling of isolation, not having anyone nearby for support or to share experiences.

One the most frequently mentioned areas of contention for Black students was the issue of the Eurocentric curriculum, as illustrated by this student:

> Firstly, I think it is absolutely crucial that all courses should re-examine the curriculum they offer to students at University. These courses should have relevance to Black students. I am currently in my second year at the University and since I came here, I have not had the opportunity, that for example some women students have had with Women Studies modules, to have the opportunity to study modules that deal exclusively with issues affecting Black people. Secondly, we must have more Black academics, there is very few Black lecturers at Universities if any in some cases, and this cannot be good for Black students, it is a real problem indicative of the invidious nature of racism in our society. Universities are neither above or beyond society and its problems. (Female: second year: English Studies)

Conclusion

What comes out very strongly in this study is that both FEIs and HEIs are seen by Black students to be failing to find effective ways of addressing issues of racism, there was *a culture of arrogance* which seemed to overlook the immense contributions that Black people have made and continue to make in all aspects of British life. Black students need to feel that their presence is acknowledged and that they are given adequate support once they are there.

> There should be a structure in place for Black student support, a structure that includes support from both white and Black lecturers. (Male: third year: Legal Studies)

In their view there should be a radical re-examination of the curriculum and course content of all course:

> There should be an expansion of the curriculum so as to include more coverage of Black issues in specific areas, for example, in the politics or law modules there could be coverage of political or legal systems of African, Caribbean and Asian countries. (Male: third year: Legal Studies)

HEIs should look at their employment practices and recruit more Black staff because:

> It would also be very helpful if the Universities could employ more Black staff, who would be positive role models and mentors for Black students, offering culturally relevant support. (Male: third year: Legal Studies)

Current policies and practice underpinning HEIs need to be redefined and reshaped to take into account the ontological perspectives and pedagogical realities of students of African, Asian and Caribbean descent. This is major challenge ahead and HEIs need to take this issue on board, otherwise Black students and white tutors will be left to battle it out in the front-line with no winner at the end but a large number of Black students leaving HEIs with a negative learning experience which may adversely affect the numbers of Black students that participate in adult education. At the moment the numbers of Black students taking up HE courses is on the increase, the appropriate responses from HEIs and the predominantly white academic staff is long overdue.

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Articulating the structural and personal boundaries of adult literacy education: a comparative analysis of four nations

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Jane Mace, Goldsmith's College, University of London, UK

Gabo Ntseane, University of Botswana, Botswana

Tom Valentine, University of Georgia, USA

Moderator: Nod Miller, University of East London, UK

In both developing and developed nations, adult literacy education is a potentially powerful force for social change and equity. At first glance, it might appear that there is a long-standing and unified international literacy movement, endorsed by governments and actively advanced by mainstream societies. A more careful examination, however, reveals that beneath the superficial commonalities, there are profound differences in the way in which adult literacy education is played out in different nations – differences shaped by political and personal boundaries, class conflict, and societal and cultural norms.

In this symposium, we will move across national borders to analyse the fundamental premises which shape adult literacy education in four nations (Botswana, Brazil, the United States, and the United Kingdom) on four dramatically different continents. A panel consisting of literacy scholars from these four nations will address three broad questions designed to uncover the assumptions and disclose the boundaries of adult literacy education as it is practised in their countries. The three questions are:

1. What is the official governmental stance with respect to adult literacy education??

This question will allow presenters to explore issues of educational and social policy, the ways in which such policies are formed and propagated, and the role and power of dissenting perspectives that challenge the official stance.

2. How does the official governmental stance affect adult literacy education's unction as a force for social change and equity?

This question will allow presenters to explore issues of educational goals, curriculum, and the legitimate scope of educational practice, as well as the mechanisms for enforcing the government's position.

3. How do individual adult educators fit into the structures of adult literacy education?

People select their career paths and personal missions, and these choices are purposeful. In answering this question, the panelists will speculate on the phenomenologically assigned meanings of being a literacy educator, partially through an autobiographical analysis of how they came to be literacy scholars, and partially in terms of issues of class, race, and gender that affect who does and who does not decide to pursue this line of work.

Nod Miller will serve as moderator for the session, which will include adequate time and appropriate structures for full group interaction. Because of space limitations, the present paper will focus on the third question, with particular emphasis on autobiographical account. Here follow the reflections of the four presenters.

Reflections of Tim Ireland, Brazil

When I was around nine or ten years old a visiting missionary monk spent a week at our house. Somehow his tales of life in Africa (I think, but at least 'abroad') contaminated me and may, in part, be to blame for a life in which crossing geographical borders and breaking linguistic and educational boundaries has become something of a habit. The experience of being a foreigner in a foreign land (I say that because to some extent I have now become a 'foreigner' in my native land) is useful for the insights it brings on language acquisition for those working with literacy education.

My first direct involvement in adult literacy education was as a trainee social-worker-cum-literacy-worker with young deaf Asian immigrants in Leicester who had come to Britain after being expelled from Uganda. For the majority, the result of this odyssey in search of a permanent homeland was that they had never been to school and had only developed language systems with which to communicate with their immediate family and intimate friends. This was literacy with a difference in that it included the acquisition of basic language structures. Despite my sense of inadequacy for the task, I felt I could do more as an educator to facilitate the insertion of these youngsters in the local (deaf) community than as a social worker.

In a search for 'solutions', I took part in a literacy course for voluntary tutors in Leicester and then decided to cross the border formally and persuaded the agency by whom I was employed to second me for a Diploma course in Adult Education rather than a Certificate in Social Work. It was during this period that I was first introduced to the writings of Paulo Freire which became an increasingly important point of reference. I had now been initiated into the academic world of adult education.

From Manchester it seemed but a step to João Pessoa in the northeast region of Brazil where I took up an academic post on a recently established Master's course in Adult Education - at that time the only one in South America. Once again at thirty I was reduced to the role of an adult illiterate (in Portuguese) whilst also having to learn a new culture - at that time still subjugated to a military regime - and the historical importance of (il)literacy within the development process.

For several years adult literacy was part of my daily life (in the state of Paraíba approximately 50% of the population over 15 years old was illiterate). However, my principal concern was academic, with constant reference to concrete practice as pedagogical adviser to a group which offered a service of popular education to rural social movements (civil, trade union, church). This work as adviser led me eventually (1982) to a long-standing involvement with the building workers' trade union in João Pessoa. Although the question of literacy was always present at a practical level - a large majority of those who work in the industry are rural migrants with very little formal schooling - the first years were occupied with leadership training. It was only from 1990 that the trade union together with a group of lecturers from the university decided to set up a literacy programme for building workers based in the building site. Since then, I have continued co-ordinating the project which proves a source of constant practical and theoretical challenges amongst which I include the relationship between literacy and economic development, the production of adequate teaching and reading material for adult literacy, the formation of adult literacy workers and the contribution of literacy to political participation.

My involvement in literacy during the last eighteen years in Brazil has been to the background of a growing recognition by society of the civil rights of the adult illiterate who only in 1985 won the right to vote. Over the years, government policy has oscillated violently from large investment in mass literacy campaigns (MOBRAL) to the present situation in which the magic word in government literacy policy is 'partnership' with the third sector. In the academy, the influence of Freire has been diluted with Ferreiro and Teberosky and the constructivist school - strongly influenced by Piaget and Chomsky - and more recently, Vygotsky and Bakhtin exercising a growing influence. However, the challenge of the process of literacy and literacies remains strong in a country in which illiteracy goes hand-in-hand with poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and other forms of social apartheid and exclusion. Literacy does not represent a solution to these problems but it can represent a step in the direction of a sense of self-respect and human dignity.

Reflections of Jane Mace, UK

When I first joined the ranks of adult literacy volunteer tutors in 1969, I met my student once a week in my kitchen, following a one-day training course. Five years later, the UK campaign got off the ground. The borders of the work at that time were unequivocal. The task before us was to teach illiterate adults 'to read'. No word, in those early years, of writing. The issue was couched in simple terms: these people were unable to read, and had a right' to be able to. What was more, these were individuals, ashamed and shy, needing to be met in private, one by one.

Well, we have come some way since then. With the movement of student publishing represented by the 'Write First Time' collective of which I was co-founder from 1975 onwards, a consensus gained ground that literacy had always been about 'writing'. Similarly, with public funding invested nationally, the unpaid amateur became eligible for a whole array of training, and the work became professionalised.

We had to wait until the mid-1980s, however, for another border to be crossed: that between teaching and research, and between those who do one and those who do the other. Until then, research studies about adult literacy education, and/or about literacy in adult life, had been undertaken at a distance from the classroom experiences of Hackney, Swansea, Norwich, or Belfast. Gradually (helped by a small but growing number of graduate programmes in adult education being offered in universities round the country) a significant body of what were by then known as adult basic education (ABE) tutors and their managers were developing their own research questions; and when a group of literacy educators and researchers launched the Research and Practice in Adult Literacy (RaPAL) network in 1984, we dissolved another boundary.

RaPAL's message then and since has been to suggest yet another border-crossing: that it is time to recognise that, just as teachers can become researchers, so too can adult literacy students. Our projects, conferences and publications in the ensuing years have been insistently working to give this message meaning: That in the research effort needed to understand the meaning of literacy in the many different social and cultural contexts of everyday life, the women and men who choose to 'improve' their own have a key part to play.

In 1992 I published a book in which I identified five principles of adult literacy education: *Principles of inquiry, context, equality, authorship and community* (Mace, 1992). Since then, as Mary Hamilton has observed, legislation in the UK has shifted the responsibility for ABE from being an optional item in local authority funding to an obligation within the structures of further education (Hamilton 1996), with an almost exclusive focus on the vocational and instrumental purposes. Situated as I now am as a university academic, the principles of adult literacy practice which I identified remain those which guide my research, but the dominant discourses today have, if anything, reinforced old borders.

The lines of my various research studies in the last ten years have been part of a resistance movement directed at the territorial lines these borders represent. Like others (for example, Street 1995) I believe we must resist the ideology which continues to present literacy as singular and mono-dimensional. Literacy, we know, must be understood as being about many languages, not merely English; it is about creation and re-creation as well as about work and economic productivity. My research projects in workplace literacy, literacy and bilingualism, literacy and media studies have meant that I have had to be a multidisciplinary; but then, like any other teacher of adult literacy, that was what I had learned to be in the classroom, too.

I began by referring to the UK 'Right to Read' campaign, and went on to suggest how, since then, practitioners have joined hands with researchers to keep broad and wide the definitions and purposes of adult literacy education. I am ending with a suggestion that, in the 1990s in the UK we are engaged in another kind of campaign, in which we must use all the resources which research can give us to maintain the same message. My own current work is focusing on a historical study of mothers and reading and writing, as a means to challenge the particular model of 'family literacy' which has held politicians in thrall as a solution to another perceived crisis in children's literacy development. Once again, I am travelling beyond the boundaries of my familiar intellectual territories. It is uncertain work: but so is learning to read and write.

Reflections of Gabo Ntseane, Botswana

I have participated in adult literacy since 1980, one of the early years of the Botswana National Literacy Program, when I was an adult education diploma student at the University of Botswana. To fulfil the practical aspect of the diploma program, I taught illiterate adults employed as building construction labourers how to read and write English. Although I noticed that the learners' motivation in the literacy program was different from the organisation's, at that time my ideas about literacy were in line with those of the government. Reading, writing, and numeracy skills were what every illiterate adult needed in my opinion to actualise themselves in spite of their social situation or context. For some time I perceived learners who dropped out of the program as adults who refused to see the light. As an adult educator I saw my role as that of a development activist who had to motivate these people to benefit from this social good necessary for national development.

This naive perception was changed by my mother's experience with the literacy program. She joined the 'functional literacy' component of the Botswana National Literacy Program because she wanted to take people's measurements for her sewing leisure activity. She quit after two weeks because in her own words 'It was a waste of time.' My disappointment in her decision to quit in spite of all the good reasons I gave her for the support of the program opened my eyes and mind. My respect for my mother as an intelligent and wise woman (then and now) triggered the need to look critically at the adult literacy program structures and the search for my role as a literacy advocate.

Taking the social context of literacy as the starting point, I realised that it was necessary to question the relevance of the definitions of the concepts 'literacy' and 'illiteracy'. Illiteracy is not an isolated social phenomenon either in its causes or consequences. This concern encouraged me to do a qualitative study on the 'definition of literacy from the African perspective' (Ntseane 1996) with Africans representing four regions of the continent, all of whom were then graduate students at the University of Georgia. The major finding of this study was that confining literacy to skills of reading, writing, and numeracy in a society, without understanding broader communication patterns, was unrealistic in Africa due to the historical oral orientation of both transmission and instruction. Based on this result and my mother's experience in particular, I wonder whether, as literacy educators, we know enough about communication patterns vital to participants prior to or when commencing with literacy work: Who is actually literate and who is not, in what language, in what context and for what society/group/culture? Do we truly value the experiences and knowledge of the local people in the practical implementation of literacy work? For me adult literacy educators need to face reality and look at literacy from a contextual perspective.

In an attempt to battle with the above questions at the individual level, I look at the relevance of the National Literacy Program in Botswana to empowerment and I realise that, without a visible role of the adult educator, empowerment could actually be threatened by the so called 'functional literacy'. What is functional and who determines that? Often evaluations are limited to the ability of participants to read and write standard material in spite of the non-existent reading environment. This is a serious limitation because participants who achieve their goals in a literacy activity are being empowered even if they cannot successfully complete a postmortem 'evaluation' of reading words and sentences five years later. Related to this is the 'dropout rate' which is reported to be very high. Since the focus is on the number of people who should be made literate in Botswana, most problems faced in literacy and post literacy work are related to misunderstanding of the complex process.

As an adult educator I don't want to contribute to literacy learners' inferiority, hence my interest in investigating the misunderstandings that are embedded in the literacy structures. We need to realise that structures of communication and traditions based on oral transmission and instruction exercise a considerable degree of control over the everyday life of people in areas where literacy programs operate. Our research on issues like these can enhance our role in the structures of adult literacy education.

Reflections of Tom Valentine, USA

When I first started attending university, I was about as square as they come. I had long hair and a hippie history, but, far from being an alienated and world-weary intellectual, I was as excited as a country bumpkin. Although I was proud to be there, my delight was tempered by uneasy feelings. I regarded academia and advanced educational status with the same suspicions with which I regarded the other characteristic attributes of the very white Protestants who run this country. Of course, some African Americans regard me as both white and privileged, but, as an Italian-American Catholic, born into a working class family of generally low educational attainment, I didn't feel very privileged at the time. Like many working class people, I experienced a very real sense of otherness during my first months at a university. Somehow, after years of dropping out of college (three times!), loading long-haul trucks, and mowing lawns, I found myself at age twenty-seven at the best university in my home state, not understanding the significance of the prestigious fellowship I had recently won. I wasn't at all convinced that people like me were meant to be at university.

I started volunteering in adult literacy as a course project during my first semester at university. This led to a series of paid jobs in literacy programs that spanned the course of my graduate studies. For the next five years, I held a variety of full and part time jobs in adult literacy, jobs that entailed teaching, administration, curriculum design, student assessment, and career development. During that time, I worked my way moved through the series of wonderful emotions that keep literacy workers energised. I was a professional educator, who understood the techniques needed to help people learn. I was a missionary who was struggling to save the poor and benighted. I was a social activist who stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the oppressed masses. I was a white guy who was right-minded enough to be accepted in minority communities and cool enough to frequent 'Black bars.'

With hindsight, I can see clearly that I needed the literacy work as a way of keeping contact with the social classes with which I was most comfortable. The city in which I both worked and studied was divided – economically and racially – by a railroad track, with the university on one side and a decaying, post-industrial city on the other. My intellectual life mimicked that divide, with my days spent among working class people who were struggling to learn and survive and my evenings spent in a weird world in which people were actually paid to play with ideas.

When I first started teaching adult literacy students, I felt enormously prepared for such an undertaking, having had years of training in educational psychology and in the teaching of reading during my undergraduate studies. Like many other literacy workers, I quickly found that the tools I carried with me were absurdly insufficient for the job. In trying to resolve the disjuncture between what I thought literacy work would entail and what it actually required, I began a feverish analysis – conducted on both sides of the railroad tracks – to determine the true nature of illiteracy and role literacy education can play in resolving the social and economic injustices that most Americans, of all classes and colours, choose to ignore. That analysis continues to this day, but most of the great 'truths' I've recognised – truths about structural inequity and the pervasive lack of governmental commitment to meaningful social change – were first arrived at during my years of practice and only later illuminated by scholarly reading.

Few people who talk about adult literacy – whether it be in centres of government, in classrooms, or at cocktail parties – really believe it to be a solvable problem. They are fascinated by illiteracy in much the same way that people in a lifeboat are fascinated by those who drown around them. Their conversations are characterised by 'us-them' language and depersonalisation, and all too often they use illiterate people as a psychological mechanism to bolster their own feelings of well-being. Because of this, public funding for adult literacy education in America is pathetically inadequate and ever unreliable.

I do not find adult literacy work comfortable. In terms of social change, we've accomplished very little during the twenty years in which I have been on the scene, though the effect literacy education can have on certain individual lives is profound. I pursue literacy education, not because it is a promising enterprise, but because it is one of the very few investments that the country makes in those members of our society who have far too little. In its current state, adult literacy education is uninspired and un-jazzy, but, for many Americans, it is the only hope they have of improving their lives.

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Civil society and Swedish popular adult education

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Broad changes in society with attacks on the welfare state and general scepticism of the modern project have brought civil society and the changing relationship between state-community-social movement and the individual to the forefront of both the political and the scholarly agenda. Much of the discussion is centred on the idea of civil society. However, as Seligman (1992) points out, the rediscovery of the civil society concept has come to mean different things to those writing within a Western perspective and those living 'East of the Elbe'. For many of those in East Central Europe it is a call for the institutionalisation of the principles of democratic politics of the West on which principles of citizenship are based:

> In a sense then, what civil society means to writers in contemporary East Central Europe are the formal, legal, and institutional venues through which the individual as an autonomous moral agent can act out his or her needs and desires in the social and political sphere. (p .6).

In the West the discussions about civil society are often closely connected to the emergence of the so-called new social movements. There is an emphasis on community and on the re-establishment of public space through the transformation of the state apparatus and, particularly in the USA, to counteract the negative effects of the ideology of individualism (Boggs 1986; Seligman 1992). Bell (1989, 56) states that there is a demand for a manageable scale of life where more decisions are made locally without control by the state bureaucracies. Cohen (1985) sees the traditional social movements as large-scale organisations with a quasi-political character, assuming tasks of economic and political steering. In accord with Habermas' communicative theory the new social movements can illustrate a form of democratic action, based on communicative interaction that would revitalise the public sphere and so, renew public life (Habermas, 1991). Similarly Giddens (1994) notes that in the post-traditional order individuals more or less have to engage with the wider world if they are to survive. He continues (p. 7):

> Information produced by specialists (including scientific knowledge) can no longer be wholly confined to specific groups, but becomes routinely interpreted and acted on by lay individuals in the course of their everyday actions.

According to Boggs (1986) there are some common characteristics of the new social movements. They flourish outside the established political system and there is an open and participatory style of politics. He argues that they are reluctant to compete for political power in the arena of mass based parties and that they try not to gravitate towards a 'mass-based organisation' model. Further they attempt to avoid duplicating the political division of labour between institutional élites and atomised masses. As Boggs (1986, 14) so rightly points out:

> The ongoing conflict between prefigurative (value-oriented) and instrumental (power-oriented) dimensions of popular movements has all too often been resolved in favour of the prefigurative, with typically fatal results. Lost in this outlook is an understanding of the transition from present to future as a complex process and with it any insightful approach to political strategy.

From this perspective it can be fruitful to look at popular adult education in Sweden and its role in civil society. Popular adult education has been part of the broad social movements that formed what has come to be known as the Swedish Model. The interesting point is that the Swedish popular movements chose a strategy diametrically opposed to what characterises the new social movements by adopting strong centralised organisations struggling to achieve as much political power as possible. Thus, the Swedish case can perhaps add some insight into crucial issues facing contemporary social theory on civil society, new social movements and the role of popular adult education.

This has been the point of departure for a broad interdisciplinary research program focusing on the role of Swedish popular adult education in civil society. In this session we shall briefly present some of the analytical and empirical work that has been carried out. We will start by looking at popular adult education from a history of ideas perspective, then move to the institutional aspect and thereafter approach the topic from a pedagogical perspective.

Popular adult education: the philosophy and ideas

Swedish popular adult education has its origin in the same tradition as the European democratic movement from the time of the double revolution and can be understood in terms of the 'bildung' processes in society. The concept can on the one hand be regarded as a free process and on the other hand the result of this very process. The free process is usually expressed in words like: to form, to create, to develop the capacities and potential in the human being. The condition for making this possible is that the process is free, as it is only then that the seeds in the human soul can grow. From this romantic notion different institutional arrangements for fostering bildung have evolved. The most famous of these are the Humboldt-university in Berlin, where the keyword was 'lehr-und lernfreiheit', which means the freedom for students and teachers to organise their own research and studies, both in form and content. The very same idea has from its beginning come to inform Swedish popular adult education, here expressed as free and voluntary. People were presumed to arrive voluntarily at folk-high schools and study-circles, and once there they should be free to decide what and how to organise their studies.

This tradition had its roots in the evolving social movements, mainly the labour, the temperance, and the free church movements. These movements were located in the civil society, and stood in direct opposition to the state. Using Habermas' terminology of system-and life-world we can say that the first face of popular adult education occurred in the life-world. With the social movements gradually being closely integrated into the Swedish State there came to exist a contradiction in popular education between the State-power and civil society or expressed differently 'how free is free?' and whose needs are going to be satisfied? Is it the social and cultural interest of the class, interpreted by someone, the party or the trade union or is it the individual fully capable to formulate his or her own needs and interests? One might say that the field of popular education has been placed in the tension of system- and life-world.

The debate on bildung has centred around this problem. According to the neo-humanistic ideal the individual is in focus and the main purpose becomes that of personal development. As Wilhelm von Humboldt formulated it, the process of bildung takes place in the individual. It is the human being as human, and not as citizen, to speak with Rousseau, that is of interest. The other main idea in the debate, the education of the people as citizens, is an expression of the Enlightenment. This is based upon a belief in science and technology as well as economic and political progress. The ideal type is the active citizen, prepared to participate in the work for the future. However, if one looks carefully at the main thinkers and actors in the Swedish tradition of popular adult education there appears to be a third ideal, that of self-education (Gustavsson 1991). Here the study process and even knowledge are seen as a self-governed activity. The institutional expression for this is the study circle. From a historical point of view it is possible to follow a line from Rousseau's *Emile* over Kant, to the Swedish organic intellectuals who formulated the tradition.

This tradition is a fascinating combination of practice and intellectual framework. The intellectuals expressed what was going on in practice, which in turn made it possible for the activists to see and understand what was really going on. Analysed in terms of free process and goal/result, the strength in the Swedish type of popular education in its classical phase, was the combination of the neo-humanistic and citizenship ideals. The necessity of a free process was realised both on an individual and a collective level. Helping the individual to develop was a necessary prerequisite for a strong collective that was capable of transforming an unjust society through its organisations, the social movements.

The notion of deliberative democracy is central to the philosophy of popular adult education. Bernard Manin (1987) discusses the connection between the legitimacy of the state and the possibilities the population has to ponder over and to talk about political issues and decisions. Following Rousseau he says that there must be some kind of social contract between citizens that will give the state legitimacy. Manin is however critical towards Rousseau in that he does not pay attention to what has to forego the shaping of opinions, the 'deliberation of all.' He states (p. 352):

> (it is) necessary to alter radically the perspective common to both liberal theories and democratic thought: the source of legitimacy is not the predetermined will of individuals, but rather the process of its formation, that is deliberation itself ... a legitimate decision does not represent the will of all, but is one that results from the deliberation of all.

This, he goes on to say, is what constitutes a deliberative democracy. The concept of deliberation has both an individual and a collective meaning: individual in the sense that each citizen has to deliberate with himself, seeking arguments and judging them; collective in the sense that these arguments and judgements are discussed and reformulated together with others. The actual point where decisions are made is not as important for the democracy as is the discussion, the political dialogue. In the same spirit the audit report from the *Swedish Democracy Council* (Rothstein 1995) adopted a broad definition of democracy and chose to talk about democracy as dialogue. It states that a democracy must rest on citizen rule, a state based on acceptance, law and with power enough to enforce political decisions. The challenge is to find a working balance in between these three factors. To find that balance we have to compromise and it is while working out those compromises that citizens must deliberate with one another. This is especially important when it comes to establishing citizen rule. Citizens have to get 'control of the political diary', have an 'enlightened understanding' among, good participation in elections and a well functioning life of associations and local self control. The report states (p. 13):

> Democracy as citizen rule is the political method by which independent and reflecting people under equal conditions through discussions reach decisions on issues that they themselves have recognised as being common questions.

Putnam (1993), who discusses what the true basis for democracy in a society might be, expresses a similar idea. According to the author it is crucial that there exists an arena where people from different social classes and with different views on life and politics can meet and exchange ideas, modify them and form opinions in social interaction with each other.

Popular adult education, with its study circles provides such an arena where people can meet and interact in an informal way. They are indeed in themselves a specific public sphere where individual aims and opinions can be confronted with others, be fused together or more clearly stated with the result that a basic element in democracy is established and enforced. Moreover, the study circle providing a form of public arena gives an opportunity for individuals to transform their individuality to citizenship through participating. Entering the study circle one is already something more than just an individual, one is acknowledging the fact that one can share interests and goals with fellow human beings. We can illustrate this with an example from the research project *The Circle Society* (Andersson, Laginder, Larsson and Sundgren 1996).

A part-time farmer Erik, as we might call him, is in his sixties and participates in a couple of study circles. Sweden recently entered the European Union which brought with it entirely new conditions for Swedish farmers. A lot of technicalities had to be learned about how land and production should be registered so as to get a maximum of support from the union and the state. Erik entered the study circle *My farm in EU* partly to manage the new paperwork, partly, as he stated clearly in the interview, because it is his way of getting out to meet the other farmers in the nearby region. He also participates in a second study circle with almost the same people. That circle is about how to care for the forest and its wild life. Farming and forestry is for Erik much more than making a living, it is a life style and he has strong feelings for the land, the forest and wildlife. In fact farming is his occupation, hobby and a basis for his social life. The study circle was organised for the local farmers' organisation by the regional division of one of the study associations for popular education. In this context Erik meets his far off colleagues once a week almost all year round. They discuss the official topic but they also dwell on different subjects of interest to the members of the group. The topics can range from family issues, technical advice, local politics to the question of whether or not Sweden really should have entered the European Union. Personally Erik says he changed his opinion last year, from being positive to negative. He did so after having tested his arguments in the group and been convinced by a few of the more critical members of the group. There was, however, no pressure to reach consensus in the group, every person had the right to his/her own opinion.

My farm in EU is an example of how provision of certain specific study circles have been encouraged by the state to help citizens develop a perspective on, for society, crucial issues. It also reflects the close and complex relationship between the state and popular adult education in its institutionalised form.

Swedish popular adult education: the institution

To the question 'What is popular adult education' it is most likely that the lay person would answer 'adult education associations and folk high schools'. That is to say the respondent defines the concept in terms of institutions. This was also the point of departure for the recent Parliamentary Committee whose task it was to analyse if state subsidy for popular adult education was used in accordance to stated goals (SOU 1996, 159).

According to the Bill (1990/91, 82) popular adult education has three roles: as an agency of popular movements, an adult educator, and as a supporter of culture. As has been the case in every official document since the first state subsidy to popular adult education in the beginning of the century, the Bill emphatically stresses that popular adult education shall be free, voluntary, and self-governing. It is the organisers of popular adult education who shall be responsible for establishing the goals of the programme while parliament and the government stipulate the goals for subsidies. Officially popular education receives state support on the basis that it contributes to democracy and equality as well as providing infrastructure for popular movements.

The Bill (p. 6) states:

> The free and voluntary popular adult education:
> - promotes democracy, equality, and international understanding and development,
> - is based on people's free and voluntary search for knowledge
> - is characterised by democratic values and co-operation
> - aims at strengthening participants' abilities and opportunities to influence their life and together with others change the situation in accordance with their own values and ideas,
> - contributes to the promotion of popular culture,
> - provides support and stimulation for studies

within popular movements and volunteer organisations directed towards the fulfilment of the ideas of these organisations and

- stimulates an interest among all, but particularly among those with a short formal education, to seek new knowledge.

It is stressed that the study associations should give priority to activities for those who are educationally, socially and culturally disadvantaged. The expectation that popular adult education has a role to play, not only for the individual and society in general, but also for the culture of popular movements that has been a cornerstone in the 'Swedish model', is expressed in the Bill as well as in the recent evaluation.

The main organisations for popular adult education are folk high schools and study associations. The latter, offering study circles and cultural events, are responsible for the majority of participants and receive the main share of state subsidies and are also supported by local and regional levels of government. The study associations have from the beginning been closely associated with the main popular movements that came to form the Swedish society and create what is known as the Swedish Model. An interesting phenomenon in the international literature is the reference to popular adult education as being a popular movement in itself. In Sweden however, it is seen as a branch within the respective popular movements. What characterises the Swedish situation is the fact that within the movement a special organisation for popular adult education has been created.

The first study association was *Arbetarnas bildningsförbund*, ABF (the workers study association) formed in 1912. Other study associations have their roots in the free-church movement, temperance movement, peace and environmental movements.

The present popular adult education, with its roots in the popular movements, was preceded by two generations of popular adult education grounded in different aspirations where the main aim was to discipline. *The Society for the Spread of Useful Knowledge*, patterned after English models, was established in 1833 and aimed to develop good habits. *Stockholm's Workers Institute*, created in 1880, had considerably greater similarities to today's popular adult education. The difference was that the popular adult education that *Stockholm's Workers Institute* undertook *had as its aim insight and knowledge, not opinion and action* (Leander 1978, 15).

The state support is channelled through 'Folkbildningsrådet' (The National Board of Popular Education) to the different associations. 'Folkbildningsrådet' is a non-state organisation with representatives of folk high schools and study associations performing some tasks traditionally carried out by the state bureaucracy. Presently there are eleven recognised study associations that receive state subsidy. Study associations are today part of a highly institutionalised popular adult education system with large national and local organisations. A study association has, at the national as well as the local level, a board with representatives of its member organisations. The board sets the direction for how the association through its provision of study circles and cultural events, recruitment strategy and funding regime, within the limits of the state subsidy, can realise its ideology and aspirations.

State subsidy for study circles was introduced in 1947. A few years thereafter 25,000 circles were organised. By 1993/94 this figure had rocketed to 330,000 circles and 115, 000 cultural events organised by the study associations (Svensson 1996). 75 percent of adults have at least once participated in a study circle (Jonsson and Gähler 1995). Despite these impressive figures it should be noted that, due to funding restrictions, there has been a decreasing participation rate reported by adults aged 16-74, since the late 1970s (Rubenson 1996). The practical-aesthetic areas attracted by far the most participants, 40 percent, while social and societal subjects, second most popular, attracted 18 percent of all study circle participants. With the expansion came a certain development towards professionalisation, particularly of the administration and to a lesser degree of study circle leaders.

By now it ought to be obvious that a major contradiction in Swedish popular adult education is on the one hand the almost holy conviction that it shall be free and voluntary and on the other hand its dependence on state subsidy. The influence of state subsidy can be illustrated by how the target groups get defined. ABF, which up to today is closely integrated into the labour movement, directed before the introduction of state subsidy in 1947 all activities to its member organisations. However, within a couple of years of the reform at least half of all study circles were directed towards the general population (Svensson 1996). Popular adult education has increasingly become an instrument of the state to achieve some of its goals. In the 1950s and 1960s official documents stress that it should compensate for inadequacies in the formal school system and in the 1970s it also becomes embedded in the radicalisation of the labour movement and a state instrument for redistribution of control and influence in society. To a large extent the study associations have shared most of the goals expressed by parliaments, if not always accepting the regulations that accompanied them. Quite naturally the study association with an ideology furthest away from the Social democrats, that for most of the time has formed the government, is not in total agreement. Thus, the study association connected with the conservative party wants to see the stress on particular target groups more as a goal for popular adult education in general than something that should govern its own activities (Svensson 1996).

This institutional characteristic of Swedish popular adult education puts the focus on the nature of the state. More precisely, we have to look at the link between the societal processes and structure and institutional processes as they relate to popular adult education and training and the possibilities and limits of the Swedish State. Carnoy (1995, 3) argues that there are crucial differences in what adult education attempts to do and can do in different socio-political structures.

According to Korpi's theory on power mobilisation (Korpi 1978), it is the balance in power resources between major collectives or classes, in particular, capital and organised labour that regulates the distribution of life opportunities social consciousness, conflicts on the labour market, public institutions and so on. Similarly, changes in power tend to be reflected in changes in social institutions and their *modus operandi*. The theory postulates that a strong labour organisation can get the state to act against the interest of capital. Esping-Andersen (1989) sees parliamentary class mobilisation as a mean for the realisation of the social democratic welfare state. The liberal welfare-state, with its means-tested assistance and modest universal transfers, caters mainly to a clientele of low-income dependents. Entitlements are strict and often associated with stigma. The social democratic welfare state, according to Esping-Andersen, rather than tolerating a dualism between state and market, between working class and middle class promotes an equality of the highest standard rather than an equality of minimal needs. The Swedish Model can therefore be seen as a result of having two strong classes, labour and capital, and not, as commonly is the case, only one, capital. Further the common good was promoted by the fact that the labour movement not only acted in its capacity of an interest group but also from its historical roots as a social movement promoting civil society. Contrary to the position of new social movements, it was in the traditional political arena and by integration of corporatism and political power that the labour movement achieved its goal.

According to this perspective the highly institutionalised form of popular adult education with its contradiction of state involvement and at the same time being free and voluntary is a result of the collective political strength of the volunteer sector, particularly the labour movement.

Despite the obvious success of the Swedish Model to create a relatively more equitable world, it is not without problems. The model of a few strong organisations brought about a merger of smaller units, centralisation and bureaucratisation with the result that members often felt they had little or no influence over the organisations. It is also very evident that while solidarity wage policies and active labour market policies, like the general social policies, have benefited women in many ways, women are less represented within the corporatist than the political power structures including the study associations (SOU 1990, 44). Independent free organisations can, on the one hand, counteract hierarchical dominance. On the other hand they can also be an instrument for maintaining and strengthening existing inequalities and favouring special interests. Issues that are not supported by powerful organisations/interests do not make it to the agenda. Further representative democracy can be threatened by the extent of the delegation of power to organisations/interests. So, for example, the state subsidy for popular adult education only goes to the eleven formally recognised study associations.

As mentioned above, the new social movements advocate small non-bureaucratic organisations with a high degree of participation by the members. In this respect and in view of the importance of the Swedish unions the following results from the Commissions study is of interest (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows that more employees believe that the union can influence the work situation that saw themselves having influence over the union. This reflects the problem between representative and deliberative democracy in the traditional Swedish popular movements. A strong labour movement operating within a corporatist structure, while highly successful in building a social democratic welfare state, has problems activating its members. It is of interest here that the Commission found a very strong correlation between taking initiative at the workplace and interest in politics and

Table 1 Influence through unions
(After Petterson, Westholm and Blomberg, 1989, 125)

Possibility to influence the union	The unions possibility to influence work situation	Percent of employees
Large	Large	29
Large	Small	8
Small	Large	26
Small	Small	37
Total		100

membership in organisations. We therefore find it problematic when representatives for the new social movements so strongly argue that they are not primarily grounded in labour struggles (Boggs 1986, 3). The institutional context discussed above frames the pedagogical processes, to which we now turn.

Popular adult education: the pedagogy

It is often stressed that the distinctive character of popular adult education primarily lies in the pedagogy and methodology (Rubenson, 1996). A typical study circle would often have five to ten participants who meet regularly once a week two or three hours at a time, eight to ten weeks in a row during a season. According to *the Popular Adult Education Commission* (SOU 1979, 85) the activities of the study-circle ought to build upon the joint work of the participants. The working methods should be such that they provide real practice in democratic thinking and action. Thus, *collective activities toward a collective goal are the aim* (p. 119). Tests, grades, and individual achievement ratings are therefore considered inappropriate and are not to be allowed in the study circle. The traditional role of the teacher - the teacher teaches and the participants are passive receivers - has no place in the circle. Discussions are considered key in the circle's work. The discussion is considered to contribute to the exchange of knowledge and experience and provide training in decision making. The participants should be encouraged to broaden their views and to develop an understanding not only of the specifics but to reach insights far beyond the topic under study.

The pedagogical ambitions can be understood in terms of Habermas' theory on communicative action (Habermas 1991). The theory presents an alternative concept of rationality, which is based on 'communicative action' and connected to the life-world. The critical assumption is that humans 'free of force' can engage in critical discussions to find out what is true, ethically good and decent. From this perspective popular adult education can be seen as being rooted in a different rationality from the technical rationality informing the traditional school system.

Putnam (1993) argues that democracy can function first when a basic socialisation of the population has taken place. Members of a democratic society have to attain certain 'civic virtues'. Most researchers agree, he says, that the more important of these virtues are honesty, trust and follow the law. Moreover it is of great importance that individuals recognise the social limits of their own freedom. We could add that there are other valuable virtues for a citizen similar to those virtues we would like to see our students have. Those are communicative virtues like tolerance, patience, having an open mind, being willing to admit mistakes, readiness to change one' s world view, self-control and last but not least, being a good listener.

What then is the relationship of these democratic and communicative virtues, the interaction in the study-circle and society at large? Based on what has been reported in the *Circle Society* project (Andersson, Laginder, Larsson and Sundgren 1996) the interaction, communication and relationships developed in a study circle are friendly but not intimate. In fact it seems to be marked by a certain restricted intimacy. The participants bring to the study-circle some material from their life-world, interact authentically to some extent inside the circle but at the same time they are fairly restricted when meeting fellow members of the study circle outside the time and place where it belongs. If participants meet in the village shop they would of course normally say hello to each other but they would not behave as seeing close friends that are included in their life-world. Another similar indication is that a couple of participants stated that they liked the study circle because there they can be sociable without having 'to gossip'. Although we might look upon gossiping as something negative it consists of the same kind of value statements we exchange with close friends. Personal comments then, addressed not to a close friend but to someone relatively distant we call 'gossip'. Gossiping can be understood as communicating value judgements not knowing or respecting the limits of when, where and to whom to give them. If so the relative freedom from gossiping in the study circle tells us perhaps that the intimacy of the relationship there has its definite limits and that the participants recognise this and tend to respect those limits. Other statements from study circle participants reinforce the impression that there are certain expectations as how to behave in a study circle: you should neither be to passive, refuse to interact, or be too dominant. Study circle participants should ideally show some pedagogical manners, in this case 'circle manners'.

The study circle is not only a place for social interaction but is it also a place where planned and co-ordinated action originates. The way in which people co-ordinate their acts is a central topic for Habermas. According to him acts are co-ordinated either through external pressure from the systems of power and money distribution or through agreement between individual subjects in a shared life-world. In the first case acts tend to be associated with a strategic and instrumental attitude that hinders genuine interaction between equals. In the second case interaction is associated with open dialogues among people searching for truth, deciding what is good in an ethical sense, striving to express themselves correctly and in a reliable way. The rationality guiding the co-ordination of acts is in the first case instrumental and in the second communicative. Normally we would understand the study circle as 'voluntary and free'.

There was a great variation at the individual level in the meaning given to participate in a study circle. For the same individual study circles could be both a meeting-place to break away from isolation and a way to learn something of genuine interest. However, in spite of this variety it should be noted that there was a lack of reference to what can be understood as a system's rationality. In the *Circle Society* participation could be described in 6 categories.

1. Develop an interest. The basis for choosing to join a study circle is in most cases a genuine interest.

2. Learn. Many wanted to be able to understand what is happening in the world, while others enrolled to develop their hobbies. Here, it is obvious that it is use value and not exchange value that is being referred to. However, there were examples of an indirect relation to systems rationality, as in the cases where the knowledge can be significant in work or later in some formal training.

3. Fellowship. This social function is very important function and is mentioned by all participants that were interviewed. It is clear that social relations were viewed in terms of co-operation rather than competition. The majority of the interviewed participants mentioned these first three categories. However, there were three categories that were less frequently mentioned:

4. To develop as a person. Some participants improved their self-esteem by participating in the circle.

5. The value as a democratic forum. Some stressed the opportunity they had to learn to express an opinion and to take part in a debate.

6. The form of study. Some expressed as significant the freedom to choose and the lack of examinations. Some also mention the informality of the interaction as an important value.

These data indicate that the circle participants foster a communicative rationality rather than an instrumental one. However, the degree in which they use this communication to co-ordinate their act to reach common goals can well be questioned. It is evident that they co-ordinate their acts in that they keep the circle going, stick to a common subject and meet regularly. The more important issue, however, is the extent to which the participants get together, communicate and co-ordinate their actions in order to improve their collective situation. At times it occurs like in the circle *On our way towards the future* (see Andersson, Laginder, Larsson ans Sundgren 1996). Here a middle-aged woman, Anna, who is educated as a nurse's assistant and is working at a service-home for elderly people run by the community, participated in a circle addressing the changes towards individual salaries. The initiative to the change came from the central employer organisation and was accepted by the national union. Although Anna, like most of her colleagues, found the new system a bad one she entered the study circle hoping to be able to make individual salary decisions more fair. The union organised the circle through ABF. When Anna describes her motives for and experiences of the study circle it is clear that it has multiple meanings for her. During the work of the circle the participants brought up and dealt with topics that were not the official ones in her study circle. Thus the participants spent a great deal of the time talking about their work tasks, comparing experiences and discussing how to act in the new situation. However, reviewing the material from the *Circle Society* study as well as previous research (Sköld and Åström, 1989; Svenson 1989) it appears as if this is not typical for the large majority of circles. Before the introduction of state subsidy when study circles were only directed towards serving the needs of member organisations and not the public at large the action component was very much at the core. Thus, study circles seem to offer a specific public arena where one can be a citizen among others and where one can develop a communicative rationality which however is not immediately connected to the co-ordination of acts directed towards goals of common interest. The study circle is, it appears, mainly a place for what we could call 'communicative learning', pursuing a personal interest but it is also a place for deliberation. Community members seem to some extent to deliberate on common affairs. In that respect the study circle contributes to the forming of citizenship, to local democracy and to the integration of the local community.

In is of interest to relate our description of the pedagogy of study circles to Tyack and Tobin's (1994) discussion of what they call the common 'grammar of schooling' - a general structure that all school systems have in common. According to the authors central dimensions in the grammar are a specific choice of content, compartmentalisation and fragmentation of knowledge and homework. Furthermore time is broken down into modular called lessons. Other aspects of this grammar are tests, exams and the unequal relation between students and teachers. This grammar is evident in the North American as well as in African schools and has remained intact over time despite various reforms of the educational system. The pattern of school work reflects an instrumental rationality, the acts of students are co-ordinated by the logic of the system and often students cannot find their own acts very rational in terms of criteria like useful knowledge or interest or need of knowledge. However, in the case of study circles the system world with its credentialism and links to the hierarchical work structure is less visible. The knowledge hasn't the same obvious exchange value except through the use value that is developed.

Finally the pedagogical ideals of popular adult education will be related to Knowles' andragogical theses (Knowles 1970). Despite repeated criticism against its empirical base and the concept's validity (Long 1993), it strongly reflects the dominant view in adult education literature and has been an important inspiration for recommendations on how to teach adults. The primary aim of adult education is, according to the andragogical view, to develop the adult's capacity to be in control over their life self-directedness (Brookfield 1989). The pedagogical and methodological view of the popular adult education concept contains, in and of itself, the andragogical ideals but it also comprises another dimension. While the andragogical tradition wholly originates in, and focuses on, the individual, the grammar of popular adult education also takes into consideration the collective. In the context of study circles this is expressed in terms of *collective inquiry* as well as *collective work toward a collective goal*. It should therefore not be sufficient that participants merely take part in planning and decisions, which fulfil the andragogical ideal. In popular adult education contexts, considerable attention is given to how the methods, including the discussion, can be used as practical training in democracy.

Instead of using adult and adulthood as the way to approach practice, as is the case in the andragogical debate, one has to look at how the institutional context (structural and ideological-cultural sub-context) contribute to the shaping of the popular adult education process, that is its grammar. This ideology refers to the world of ideas of the organisation and includes perceptions, thought patterns, values, and traditions, which are assumed to give direction to the individual's comprehension of what is the natural, possible, and desired pattern for the activity. Consequently it does not appear particularly fruitful to discuss the pedagogic nature of popular adult education separately from the institutional context. The extent to which a certain activity within popular adult education corresponds to the ideals depends to a large degree on the structural relationships and the adoption of the world of ideas of popular adult education.

To sum up, our conclusion is that one can see popular adult education as a part of the corporate state, lying at the crossroad between civil society and the state. In accordance with Habermas one can locate popular adult education at the intersection between the system world and the life world and argue that through popular adult education the precondition for organised democracy has been created. The institutional structures strongly influence the pedagogical processes and provide the prerequisite for a grammar different to the one informing the formal school system. At the same time it is clear that the delicate balance between being free and voluntary and being part of the state apparatus is constantly threatened. In Sweden popular adult education was both an instrument for the development of the Swedish Model and a result of it. The social movements, which built the welfare state are today a central part, not only of the state, but also involved in the transition to minimise the state in order to give a greater role to market forces. In a time, when the conditions that first gave rise to, and later resulted in, a greatly expanding participation are transformed, popular adult education must recover its position as well as rethink its forms. If it becomes fixed in its forms, the danger is that the popular adult education concept will come to stand for a highly idealised model that rests more on optimistic expectations than on reality. The civil society and a development of the classical tradition of *bildung* provide one way out of the present dilemma.

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